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Ideological Transformation of Egypt's Largest Militant Groups

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Abstract

This thesis discusses the revisions of the Egyptian Islamic Group and al-Jihād Organisation with a special focus on the theology and ideology of the two movements. The main question is: how could these groups revise their thought using Islamic theological arguments though their previous pro-violence thought was also based on Islamic theological arguments. Textual analysis, coupled with the relevant aspects of framing literature, is the main tool used to discuss the ideology of the two groups and answer the research questions. Yet, the thesis also provided extended literature review of the topic as well as historical sociopolitical and economic accounts of the two organisations in order situate the texts in their proper contexts and link thought to action.

The thesis provides detailed description and analysis of the two groups' ideologies and concludes that one of them has genuinely revised its thought while the other has not. After explaining how this change has happened in theological textual as well as in framing terms, the thesis provides an analysis on why one group could change while the other could not. The thesis shows the level of change in any Jihadist movement thought corresponds with the level of concepts it transfers from the static to the flexible sides of the Sharia, and that the nature and original objectives of each group at the time of its establishment play a great role in any revision process when violence proves counterproductive to the original objectives of that group.

The thesis also proves that it is not just the ideas or ideological arguments that matter but also the process through which these ideas and arguments are framed. In addition, the fact that only one of the two groups has genuinely changed while both have undergone the same structural sociopolitical and economic conditions in the same country shows the failure of structural sociopolitical and economic approaches in explaining the reasons of violence and revisions of Islamist movements in causal terms, and illustrates the ability of the textual approach to reveal facts and secrets that other approaches could not

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own original work, and that it has not been submitted in any form for any other degree or professional qualification. However, I have reused parts of my previous research in this thesis. When there is something used from my previous works, it is properly acknowledged and referenced. I certify that anything taken from or based upon the work of others has its source explicitly cited.

Mahmoud Ibrahim

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah (SWT) for granting me the power and aid to accomplish this work and manage my affairs overall. I would also like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to my parents who have always supported and cared for me throughout my life. My sincere gratitude is also due to my wife for her dedication, understanding and support throughout my studies.

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Chapter One: Literature Review and Situating the Study

Introduction

Egypt's largest militant Islamist movements, al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya (The Islamic Group or the IG) and al-Jihād Organisation renounced violence and started to argue against the jihadi¹ ideology worldwide. This process is called *murājāt* or ideological revisions, which is the process wherein the two groups had reviewed their previous violent thoughts and started to argue against violence using Islamic religious reasons, just as their earlier violence was also based on religious justifications.² As the two groups have deployed concepts from Islamic traditions to organise their repertoires of actions and interventions in the social and political sphere, before and after revision, this dissertation aims to explore these concepts or frames. So the dissertation explores the violence and also the revisions of the two groups with a focus on the text and ideology as expressed in the two groups' theological justifications in their literature.

As the main goal of the dissertation is to explain the thoughts of the two groups and analyse how theological texts were used to justify their ideological stances, the dissertation covers the topic primarily from an 'Islamic studies' perspective, and not from a 'political science', 'international relations', 'social science', or 'historical' perspective, or from any other field, though some relevant aspects of these sciences have been employed and highlighted. As the following literature review shows, the relevant literature on this issue covers these other fields by focusing on causal factors of violence or on the revisions with only little attention to ideology, which leaves a gap in the literature on militant Islamism. Thus, this study intends to break this norm by focusing on ideology, in theological terms, as reflected in the literature written by Islamists on violence and non-violence. However, other causal factors are discussed briefly to contextualise the topic and link thought to action.

This chapter presents a general review and assessment of the literature on militant Islamist movements and the transformation some of them have undergone. The chapter shows that the relevant literature on this issue is mostly political, with a view to showing the causal factors of violence and non-violence. Though most of this literature refers to ideology, it pays ideology

¹ This and similar terms are defined below.

² M. A. A. Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence: A Study of the Revisions of the Egyptian Al-Jihād Organization," (MA Dissertation, Leiden University, 2008), 1.

minimal attention as it refers to it in general terms and does not provide a detailed discussion of Islamists' ideology or their theological justifications. As the literature is excessively broad, only the general relevant approaches used to study Islamism will be discussed and their relevance to the two groups under discussion will be highlighted, together with the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. This includes the cultural defence theory, state culture approach, the political process approach/social movement theories, the political culture approach (civilisational approaches) as well as textual approaches.

Next, a survey of the literature on the transformation of Islamist movements will be provided and discussed. This includes the most relevant approaches which are the traditional approaches (harmony restoration hypothesis), inclusion-moderation hypothesis, repression hypothesis and social movement theories/the political process approach. Then a review and discussion of the works that deal with the transformation of the two groups under discussion will be provided. This will help situate this study in relation to previous works and so reveal the gap in the literature that this dissertation fills. In addition, a rationale of the case selection and why the dissertation focuses on the theological and ideological dynamics rather than the external causal reasons of violence will be provided. A discussion of the relevant Arabic sources will also be given while explaining the reactions to the revisions, which will take us smoothly to the next chapter that provides a historical background and a brief causal justification for the processes of violence and also the revisions undergone by the two groups under discussion.

However, as the two groups under investigation and other similar groups are often described in the literature as Jihadists or Salafi Jihadists, it is important, before providing an overview of the literature, to define these frequently used terms which refer to adherents of Jihadism or Salafi Jihadism, which is a subset of the broader movement known as Salafism.

Typology and Definitions

This section provides a typology of the Salafi Movement in general and its subset of Salafi Jihadism in particular,³ and defines the terms that are used in this chapter and in the literature on Islamism in general.⁴ There is a lack of agreement in the relevant literature on the definition of these terms,⁵ but the definitions below are the most common and acceptable ones, and also the ones adopted in this dissertation.

Salafism and its Subgroups

Salafism at large is a Muslim Sunni religious denomination that attributes its beliefs to Islam as it was practiced by Prophet Muhammad and the first three generations of Muslims. They consider the first three generations of Muslims to be the best because they were closer in time to Prophet Muhammad, and thus best represent his teachings and way of life.⁶ It is “the method of modeling one’s thought and behavior on Muhammad and the first three generations of Muslims, called the ‘forefathers’ (Salaf).”⁷ The term Salafi means a follower of the Salaf, or Salafism.⁸

There are three major divisions of Salafism: Scientific or Scripturalist Salafism (*al-Salafiyya al-‘Ilmiyya*), Political Salafism (*al-Salafiyya al-Siyāsiyya*), and Salafi Jihadism (*al-Salafiyya al-Jihādiyya*).⁹ They differ mainly in their position towards violence, democracy and political

³ For a meticulous typology and framework on the differences and commonalities of movements of Sunni Islamism in general, see Christoph Schuck, “A Conceptual Framework of Sunni Islamism,” *Politics, Religion & Ideology* (14, no. 4 [2013]), 485-506

For a typology of Islamists in general, see Omar Ashour, *The De-radicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 7-11.

⁴ Definitions of the individual theological concepts that form the ideology of the two groups are provided in subsequent chapters when these concepts are discussed in detail.

⁵ International Crisis Group, “Deradicalisation and Indonesian Prisons, Jakarta and Brussels,” *Asia Report* (No. 142, [November 2007]), 11; Angel Rabasa, et al, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* (Arlington, Virginia: Rand Corp National Security Research Division, 2010), 1.

⁶ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, “Towards Understanding the Significance of Religion for Jihadi Violent Non-State Actors,” (PhD dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 2014), 11.

⁷ William McCants, “The Lesser of Two Evils: The Salafi Turn to Party Politics in Egypt,” *Saban Center at the Brookings Institution* (Middle East Memo, no. 23 [May 2012]), 1. McCants also notes that though Salafism prefers not to exclusively follow any of the four Sunni schools of law, it reveres the ninth century founder of the Ḥanbalī School of Law, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and adheres to his theological teachings. Ibn Ḥanbal’s legacy received a strong ideological boost from Ibn Taymiyya in the fourteenth century, who skilfully elaborated the school’s doctrines and refuted its critics. Therefore, Salafis in general particularly revere both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Ḥanbal.

⁸ Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 7.

⁹ This classification is presented and adopted, e.g., in the following works: Quintan Wiktorowicz, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (29, no. 3 [2006]), 207-39; Clark McCauley & Sophia Moskalenko,

participation. For Scripturalist Salafism, democracy is “tempting, but ultimately dead-end street.”¹⁰ They see engagement in democracy as an activity that leads to a compromise of religious principles; rather than making the political system compatible with the Sharia, democracy is more likely to make a Muslim resemble the non-Muslims and follow their principles. Thus, adherents of this subset of Salafism live ‘apolitical lives of quietist piety’.¹¹ Adherents of the second category, Political Salafism, differ with Scripturalist Salafism in that they believe that participation in democratic politics is justified despite its flaws because it ‘could serve as a vehicle to attain a more caliphate-like, Sharia-based polity’.¹² Salafi Jihadism, which is the category to which the groups under discussion belonged, dismisses democracy, believing it is an act of disbelief, and thus rejects participation in democratic systems and adopts violence as a means of changing the political order.¹³ It is defined by Omar Ashour¹⁴ as “a modern Islamist ideology which believes that armed confrontation with political rivals is theologically legitimate, instrumentally efficient method for socio-political change.”¹⁵

Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Monica Marks, “Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism: Understanding the Jihadi Current,” *Mediterranean Politics* (18: no. 1 [2013]), 104-11.

¹⁰ Marks, “Understanding the Jihadi Current,” 109.

¹¹ Marks, “Understanding the Jihadi Current,” 109.

¹² Marks, “Understanding the Jihadi Current,” 109. For more information, see Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 7-8.

¹³ This is explained in detail in chapters 3 and 5. See also Wiktorowicz, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement,” 208; Marks, “Understanding the Jihadi Current,” 109; Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 12.

¹⁴ Ashour is an outstanding researcher on causes of de-radicalisation of Islamist movements. He wrote his PhD dissertation on the causes of transformation of Islamists and later published it as a book. He also wrote several articles and book chapters on the de-radicalisation of various Islamist movements. All of Ashour’s publications emphasise the same argument on the causes of de-radicalisation and that is why the review mentioned later in this chapter on Ashour’s theory applies to all of his publications. Ashour’s works on the topic are: Omar Ashour, “Lions Tamed? An Inquiry into the Causes of De-Radicalization of the Egyptian Islamic Group,” *Middle East Journal* (61, no. 4 [Autumn 2007]), 596–627; Omar Ashour, “De-Radicalization of Jihad? The Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* (2, no. 5 [Spring 2008]), 11-14; Omar Ashour, “Islamist De-Radicalization in Algeria: Successes and Failures,” *The Middle East Institute Policy Brief* (No. 21 [November 2008]); Omar Ashour, “A World without Jihad? The Causes of De-radicalization of Armed Islamist Movements,” (PhD dissertation, McGill University, 2008); Omar Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, *Op. Cit.*; Omar Ashour, “ Hamas and the Prospects of De-Radicalization,” in Klejda Mulaj ed., *Violent Non-State Actors in Contemporary World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Omar Ashour, “Post-Jihadism: Libya and the Global Transformations of Armed Islamist Movements,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* (23, no. 3 [2011]), 377-397; Omar Ashour, “Egypt’s Revolution and the Transformation of Armed Islamist Movements towards Unarmed Activism,” in Veronique Dudouet, ed., *Civil Resistance and Conflict Transformation: Transitions from Armed to Nonviolent Struggle* (London: Routledge, 2014), 173-89.

¹⁵ Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 4; Ashour, “Egypt’s Revolution,” 174.

Jihadism and Jihad

'Jihadism' or 'Jihadist Movement' is an Islamic movement that embodies a "respect for the sacred texts in their most literal form and an absolute commitment to jihad."¹⁶ The word 'Jihadism' or 'Jihadists' should not be confused with the traditional Islamic concept of 'jihad', which literally means struggle. Generally speaking, the term 'jihad' is not exclusively used to indicate fighting or the use of physical power, for there are several forms of carrying out this religious struggle non-violently, including struggling peacefully to create a more just world. In Islamic tradition, different kinds of jihad that may not involve violence include 'jihad of the tongue, the heart, and the hand'.¹⁷ Thus, speaking out against injustice and oppression or hating them in one's heart is considered jihad. However, for Salafi Jihadists, jihad essentially means the obligation to fight 'disbelievers' using physical violence.¹⁸ It is this sense of jihad as understood by Jihadists that will be used throughout this dissertation.

Islamist Movements

'Islamist movements' are "socio-political movements which base and justify their political principles, ideologies, behaviours, and objectives on their understanding of Islam or on their understanding of a certain past interpretation of Islam."¹⁹ Islamist movements agree that religion and politics are inseparable, and that state legislation needs to be based on the Islamic Sharia. However, they differ in their interpretations of the Sharia and how to promote the goal of establishing the Sharia; through education and a gradual Islamisation of society, through promoting the good and forbidding the evil, through participation in politics and direct political pressure, or through a violent take-over of the state. These differences are based on different theological interpretations of the Sharia.²⁰

Therefore, Islamist movements can be either moderate or radical. According to Ashour, moderate Islamist movements are those which ideologically accept, at minimum, electoral

¹⁶ Giles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 220. This includes the Egyptian and other Jihadists. Therefore, if any of these terms is used, it refers to Jihadists in general, and if the word is meant for a specific type of Jihadists, it will be qualified with a specific description (e.g. Egyptian Jihadists, IG Jihadists), or will be indicated by the context of the sentence.

¹⁷ Asma Barlas, "Jihad, Holy War, and Terrorism: The Politics of Conflation and Denial," *The American Journal of Social Sciences* (20: no. 1 [2003]), 47.

¹⁸ Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," 13. For more details, see Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 8-9.

¹⁹ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 174; Ashour, *De-Radicalization of Jihadists*, 4.

²⁰ Ioana Emilia Matesan, "The Dynamics of Violent Escalation and De-escalation: Explaining Change in Islamist Strategies in Egypt and Indonesia," (PhD dissertation, University of Syracuse, 2014), 34.

democracy and political and ideological pluralism. These are the groups that aim for gradual social, political and economic changes and accept the principle of working within the established state institutions, regardless of their perceived legitimacy, refusing the use of violence to achieve their goals.²¹ By contrast, radical Islamist groups “are those movements that ideologically reject democracy as well as the legitimacy of political and ideological pluralism. They also aim for revolutionary social, political and economic changes and refuse to work within the established state institutions. Radical Islamist movements may use violent and/or nonviolent methods to achieve their goals.”²²

Even though the term Islamists or Islamist movements is generally used to refer to followers of both violent and nonviolent movements of political Islam, it is also used as a synonym with the words ‘jihadi’, ‘Jihadists’, and ‘Salafi Jihadists’ when indicated by the context, as the latter usage is included in the definition of the word.

Radicalisation/Radical

Radicalisation is “a process of relative change in which a group undergoes ideological and/or behavioral transformations that lead to the rejection of democratic principles (including the peaceful change of power and the legitimacy of ideological and political pluralism) and possibly to the utilisation of violence, or to an increase in the levels of violence, to achieve political goals.”²³

It is defined by Neumann and Rogers as “the changes in attitude that lead towards sanctioning and, ultimately, the involvement in the use of violence for a political aim.”²⁴ Thus, the term ‘radical’ as used in this study refers to people or groups that ideologically accept or justify the use of violence to achieve their political aims, even though not all who hold this view will act violently themselves.

Revisions/ De-radicalisation/ Moderation and Disengagement

By revisions, moderation or de-radicalisation of Islamists, this study refers to the process in which a violent Islamist group or person ideologically reverses the core ideas that form the

²¹ They may also be called revolutionaries, extremists or exclusivists. See Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 4.

²² Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 4.

²³ Ashour, *De-Radicalization of Jihadists*, 5.

²⁴ Peter Neumann & Brooke Rogers, *Recruitment and Mobilisation for the Islamist Militant Movement in Europe* (London: ICSR, 2007), 11.

violent ideology and de-legitimises the use of violent methods to achieve political goals, while moving towards an acceptance of gradual social, political and economic changes within a pluralist context.²⁵ So, these terms refer to the modification of Islamists' ideology (beliefs) and consequently behaviour (actions) to bring them in line with a nonviolent interpretation of mainstream Sunni Islam.

This clarifies the difference between de-radicalisation/moderation/revisions and disengagement. By the first three terms, the dissertation means the process in which a group or an individual changes their belief system, rejects the extremist ideology, and embraces mainstream Islamic values. Disengagement refers to a change in a person's radical behaviour (i.e., refraining from violence and withdrawing from a radical organisation) but not necessarily a change in his ideology, for a person could leave a radical organisation and refrain from violence but yet maintain a radical worldview.²⁶ Usually, disengagement entails an instrumental change in behaviour due to a change in political opportunity, conditions or constraints, such as the costs suffered or benefits gained by pursuing a different course of action.²⁷

As a consequence, if a militant disengages solely for pragmatic reasons, the militants may once again take up arms if circumstances change. Conversely, when de-radicalisation or moderation accompanies disengagement, it hinders the return to violence even when circumstances change,²⁸ as the core tenets of the violent ideology have changed. This means that disengagement may be temporary while de-radicalisation or moderation is of a more permanent nature.²⁹ Therefore, a genuine and successful de-radicalisation or revision process must produce a change in an individual's underlying ideology and beliefs, not just a change in his behaviour.³⁰ In addition, successfully challenging radical Islamist ideology with an alternative interpretation of Islam is more likely to not only effect a more permanent change in the

²⁵ Ashour, *De-Radicalization of Jihadists*, 5-6.

²⁶ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xiii.

²⁷ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 6.

²⁸ Naureen Chowdhury Fink and Ellie B. Hearne, *Beyond Terrorism: Deradicalization and Disengagement from Violent Extremism* (New York: International Peace Institute, 2008), 12; Ashour, "De-radicalization in Algeria," 10. Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xiv.

²⁹ For more on disengagement, see John Horgan, "Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Analysis," in Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan, eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 21-7.

³⁰ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 6.

militants' worldview, but also help weaken the radical Islamist movements by discrediting their ideology.³¹

Thereupon, though moderation is connected in the literature to liberal notions of individual rights and democratic notions of tolerance, pluralism, and cooperation,³² it will be used in this study as defined above to suit the conditions of the Islamist movements under discussion who still reject many of the liberal values. Thus, the words moderate, de-radicalised or revisionist in the context of the two groups under investigation refer to a person or a group that has gone through a process of ideological reversal of their militant ideology. In this regard the descriptions of moderate, radical, or similar terms, do not refer to the individual or group in general but to their particular view on the issue being discussed. As Jillian Schwedler argues, terms like moderate and radical may be problematic because an individual or group may hold moderate views on some issues but radical views on others. Thus, she recommends adopting distinctions specific to individual issues instead of using terms like moderate or radical. Examples include using terms like 'legalists' and 'contextualists' concerning the interpretation of religious texts, and 'accommodationists' and 'non-accommodationists' concerning participation in state processes.³³ However, though specific terms like those suggested by Schwedler are sometimes used, this study will continue to describe, as Schwedler herself does, some acts or ideas of its subjects as being radical or moderate, noting that these terms are not used to label these individuals or groups as a whole but to label their attitudes towards the specific issue being discussed, as per the definition above.

Having defined the main terms, the chapter will now turn to review the literature on the topic, starting with literature on causes of violence.

³¹ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 30.

³² Jillian Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates? Rethinking the Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis," *World Politics* (63, no. 02 [2011]), 352

³³ Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates," 351-2.

Literature on Reasons of Islamist Political Violence³⁴

In addition to social movement theories, there is a wide range of theories on the causes of political violence in general, whether Islamist or otherwise. The most common of these are known as structural-psychological (social) approaches. They examine violence by situating it within the systemic structural grievances, whether social, economic, political, or identity-based. Focused on one or more of these subcategories, a structural approach seeks to attribute the eruption of violence to the deficiencies rooted in infrastructure of the environment in which violence erupted.³⁵ On the societal level of analysis, explanations are primarily sought in the historical development and culture of a larger society or system, and in its contemporary social, economic and political characteristics. So, research often focuses on a causal relationship between certain characteristics of a society and the emergence of political violence within the same society. The most relevant examples of these include the 'political alienation theory',³⁶ the 'J-Curve theory',³⁷ 'relative deprivation theory',³⁸ 'state legitimacy theory',³⁹ in addition to some other theories that explain the mechanisms of violence such as the 'collective action/mobilisation theory'.⁴⁰

Contradicting or complementing one another, none of these theories can be generalised in all cases or claim to be the only valid theory in explaining the violence of any case study, though they can be partially valid in explaining some of the causal reasons of violence.⁴¹ Moreover, none of these theories succeeds in explaining why a few individuals, among millions in almost identical political and socioeconomic positions, pursue violence. In addition, the below-mentioned theories generally suffer from a lack of good empirically tested findings. Ted Gurr has rightly noted that the research questions raised in the sources presenting these theories are

³⁴ This section of the review is largely informed by the review of Omar Ashour in his PhD dissertation. See Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 38-67.

³⁵ For further explanation and categorisation of the roots of conflicts see, e.g., K. Rupesinghe, "The Disappearing Boundaries between Internal and External Conflicts," in K. Rupesinghe, ed., *Internal Conflict and Governance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 14-20.

³⁶ An example of this is in David Schwartz, "A Theory of Revolution," in James C. Davies ed., *When Men Rebel and Why* (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

³⁷ See James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* (27, no. 1 [February 1962]), 5-19.

³⁸ Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

³⁹ For more on this, see David Forsythe, *Human Rights and Peace* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993); Seymour Lipset, *Political Man, The Social Bases of Politics* (New York: Anchor Books, 1963).

⁴⁰ For more information on this theory, see Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978).

⁴¹ Supportive arguments of this will be provided later in this chapter.

often noticeably more interesting than most of the evidence brought to bear on them.⁴² Thus, this section of the review will briefly highlight the most relevant theories of violence while bearing in mind that many of these theories are not well empirically tested.

Theories on Islamist political violence build on these general theories. Therefore, a common feature with almost all the literature on Islamism in general and Egyptian Islamism in particular is that it mostly aims to explain the external causes of the Islamists' violence. This is also the case in the few works which have been written on the transformation of Islamist movements. Little attention has been paid to ideology or religious theological justifications. After 9/11, abundant literature began to emerge, exponentially growing in the months following the attacks, as well as theories suggesting the motivations for the strikes and the reasons behind Islamists' violence in general and al-Qaeda in particular. However, the majority of the new literature generally built on the older theories of violence, but with greater detail and variation, with a new focus on al-Qaeda and its conflict with the US and the West, instead of the domestic violence of local Islamist groups. Thus the general approaches on the causes of Islamists' violence both before and after 9/11 will be discussed together, bearing in mind that the majority of post-9/11 literature built on the previously existing theories and approaches in explaining al-Qaeda's violence.

Most of the approaches in the literature argue that Islamists rebel as a reaction to the socioeconomic, political, and/or cultural strains. With the lack of peaceful outlets, structural strains produce psychological discomfort and prompt a rebellious action.⁴³ Implicitly leaning on theories of crises, these approaches basically argue that social, economic, cultural and/or political environments create a crisis within Islamist movements which invoke reactions that take a religious form. Thus, most of the below approaches are centred around the notion of crisis or frustration though they are given several names: structural-psychological approaches, frustration-aggression approaches, social theories, or crisis approaches.

⁴² Ted Robert Gurr, "Empirical Research on Political Terrorism: The State of the Art and how it might be Improved," in Robert Slater & Michael Stohl, eds., *Current Perspectives on International Terrorism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 115.

⁴³ Quintan Wiktorowicz, ed., *Islamic Activism: Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 6.

Socioeconomic Approaches

Socioeconomic approaches seek to situate the violence of Islamists in the wider socioeconomic contexts which, fuelled with frustration, cause psychological alienation and invoke a violent action with the lack of a peaceful outlet to the undergone worries. Coupled with rising levels of urbanisation, education and thus aspirations, the sub-human conditions, the abject poverty encountered by the masses who hardly find a channel for their worries and burdens, the sharp inequalities of wealth distribution, widespread corruption and political exclusion, inevitably lead to resurgence in one way or another.⁴⁴ Fred Halliday, for example, argued that the emergence of Jihadist movements is the result of contemporary social and economic conditions.⁴⁵

Within this approach lies the literature that considers more contemporary issues, such as the challenge of modernity and globalisation, as reasons of insurgence. This literature argues that Islamist movements are the result of societies moving from the traditional agrarian to the urban capitalist systems, and that globalisation is the root of suspicion and hatred towards the West.⁴⁶

The 'economic approach' is in fact a reproduction of the 'relative deprivation theory' introduced by Ted Gurr, who defines relative deprivation as the perceived discrepancy between people's value expectations and their value capabilities, Gurr argues that, along with other factors, the more the discrepancies between 'value capabilities' and 'value expectations' increase without a timely solution, the more the sense of 'frustration' grows and the likelihood of resort to violence or 'aggression' increases. The intensity of violence would increase when the deprivation affects 'core' concerns such as physical, economic and/or social interests.⁴⁷

In fact, relative deprivation or frustration resulting from socioeconomic injustices explains a great deal of the causation of violence in Egypt. The frustration resulting from sub-human conditions, the absence of any peaceful outlet and the inability of the government to meet the high aspirations of the community, coupled with widespread despotism and oppression— all led

⁴⁴ Examples of works on Egypt that employed this approach are: Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, Trans., Jon Rothschild (London: Al Saqi Books, 1985); D. J. Sullivan and S. Abed-Kotob, *Islam in Contemporary Egypt: Civil Society vs. the State* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

⁴⁵ Fred Halliday, *Nation and Religion in the Middle East* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

⁴⁶ Examples of this include: Lionel Stapley, *Globalization and Terrorism, Death of a Way of Life* (London: Karnac Books Publishers, 2006); Stanley Hoffman, *Chaos and Violence: What Globalization, Failed States and Terrorism Mean for U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Overlook Press, 2005); John Bellamy Foster, *Naked Imperialism: U.S. Pursuit of Global Dominance* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2006).

⁴⁷ Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 59.

to violence in Egypt.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, relative deprivation cannot alone account for rebellion, though it might successfully explain part of the causation of violence. As Crozier suggested, "Men do not necessarily rebel merely because their conditions of life are intolerable: it takes a rebel to rebel."⁴⁹

In addition, though there are some empirical data to support this in several case studies, these explanations are simply challenged by the fact that these socioeconomic conditions are common to all and are not exclusive to Islamists. Thus, the issue of why the dispute takes an Islamic form as opposed to leftist or communist directions, for example, remains unanswered. In addition, though socioeconomic strains do exist, many members of the Islamist groups, even leaders such as al-Ẓawāhirī and Bin Lādin, are wealthy and far from being affected by these socioeconomic conditions. So these approaches pursue a selective way of investigation that focuses only on the poor classes and ignores or fails to account for the radicalisation of the upper or upper-middle classes, in addition to their failure to explain why these movements assume an Islamic form.⁵⁰

State Culture Approach (Political Alienation)

This approach builds on such general theories of violence as political alienation theory and state legitimacy theory. It proposes that Islamism is the result of political exclusion, state repression and authoritarianism which, with the lack of peaceful solutions, create violent reactions as rebels reject and challenge the legitimacy of the established state order.⁵¹ This approach helps in explaining some of the reasons of violence in Egypt. As explained in the following chapter, the authoritarian rule of the Egyptian regime deprived the opposition from any peaceful political participation and repressed them under severe political and security conditions. This, together with the dominance of the radical thought at that period, contributed greatly to the eruption of violence in Egypt as Egyptian militants considered the regime illegitimate because it did not implement the Islamic Sharia and because of its despotism and failure to sustain an honourable life for its people. However, though there are supportive empirical evidence of this approach, repression alone cannot be taken as a vehicle of radicalisation. Many other factors have to exist

⁴⁸ Further discussion of this is provided in chapter 2.

⁴⁹ B. Crozier, *The Rebels: A study of Post-War Insurrections* (London: C Hatto & Windus, 1960), 9.

⁵⁰ For more on this point, see Omar Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 39-41.

⁵¹ Examples of this approach include: Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *Egypt, Islam and Democracy: Critical Essays* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002); Mohammed Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel? Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca and Luis De la Calle, "Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence," *Annual Review of Political Science* (12 [2009]), 31-49.

in addition. Also, this approach faces the same critique levelled at the socioeconomic approaches explained above.⁵²

After 9/11, this argument was extended to include not only local governments in the Muslim world, but also Western countries who practise exclusion and a lack of understanding towards Muslims. The proponents of this approach argue that the Western lack of understanding and interaction with the other (Muslims) causes Islamists to be caught in their own otherness and forces them to devise strategies of resistance.⁵³

Cultural Defence Hypothesis/ Challenging to the Hegemon

This approach argues that Islamism is a reaction to the cultural invasion or imperialism of Muslim cultures and identities by non-Islamic Western values and cultures. This reaction is further fuelled by the Western states' intervention in the internal affairs of Muslim countries and cultures, whether militarily politically or culturally. Thus, radical justifications of religion followed by violent actions occur as a means of cultural defence.⁵⁴

American imperial ambitions, Western intrusion in Muslim affairs, and US support of Israel are commonly mentioned as causes of Islamists' violence, asserting that the American insistence on the one-size-fits-all notion of democracy is, in part, what generates extremists' violent reactions.⁵⁵ Like other approaches, this approach hinges on the notion of crisis which, in this case, is not caused by domestic powers but by external outside forcers that try to culturally invade the Islamic identity.

Close to this approach is the hypothesis introduced by John Turner in his book published in 2014, where he argues that violence of Salafi Jihadists is a challenge to US hegemony and the international order that stand at odds with Islamic history in general and the Salafi ideology in

⁵² For more on this approach and its critique see, for example, Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 44-6.

⁵³ Anour Majid, *Freedom and Orthodoxy, Islam and Difference in the Post Andalusian Age* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004), 105. An example of this explanation can be found in Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁵⁴ For examples of this approach, see Francois Burgat and William Dowell, *The Islamic Movement of North Africa* (Austin: Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, 1997); Martin Kramer, *The Islamism Debate* (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Centre, 1997); Graham Fuller, "The Future of Political Islam," *Foreign Affairs* (82, no. 2 [March-April 2002]), 48-64. For more information, see Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 41-2.

⁵⁵ Majid, *Freedom and Orthodoxy*, v. Examples of these in the post 9/11 writings include: Mark Hubbard, *Brutal Truths, Fragile Myths: Power Politics and Western Adventurism in the Arab World* (New York: Westview Press, 2004); W. H. Thorton, *New World Empire: Civil Islam, Terrorism and the Making of Neo-Globalism* (New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 2005); Mueller John, ed., *Terrorism since 9/11: The American Cases* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 2012).

particular. As particular aspects of US hegemony and the international system are incompatible with these historical and ideological understandings of Jihadists, Muslims rebel against this, using violence as a means to change such an international order and hegemony.⁵⁶ Though this approach has some validity in explaining some aspects of major concern to Islamists, it fails to justify why violence is mostly domestic, and not directed towards the cultural imperialists themselves. In addition, though Turner arguably answered the question of why it is only the Muslims, and not the rest of the world, who challenge US hegemony in that way,⁵⁷ he did not answer the ensuing question of why this applies to only some Muslims, and not to the majority of those who profess the Islamic faith.

Generally speaking, the approaches above are classified within structural approaches which face a great deal of critique. The main critique of these theories is that they are partial and selective. Millions of people live under frustrating conditions and never tried violence; and many terrorists do not belong to the desperate classes whose frustration they claim to be expressing. Thus though frustration may explain part of the causation of some Islamist political violence, frustration-aggression arguments are alone insufficient to explain political violence.⁵⁸

In addition, many of these theories depend on psychological explanations of violence and overgeneralisation is their most common feature. In this regard, Walter Reich has warned that "psychological accounts of terrorism are replete with explanations that ignore or blur the variety and complexity... a product of loose and weak thinking, a disregard for the need for evidence, and the habit, unfortunately endemic in so many areas of psychological discourse, of having a single idea and applying it to everything."⁵⁹

Another major challenge to these approaches is that they fail to account for transformation of Islamists under the same ongoing structural strains. Moreover, the structural strains which are used to justify the emergence of radical Islamism are common to many other societies, including

⁵⁶ John Turner, *Religious Ideology and the Roots of the Global Jihad: Salafi Jihadism and International Order* (London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

⁵⁷ He ascribed that to the nature of Islam as a religion that provides discourse for political organisation, arguing that the ability to construct an ideology that inspires global 'terrorism' out of a religious base to counter the prevailing world order is something unique to Islam and Salafi Jihadists. By this, Turner is in fact using a mixture of cultural defence hypothesis and political culture approach. See Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 32-3.

⁵⁸ Jeff Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (49, no. 1 [February 2005]), 19.

⁵⁹ Walter Reich, "Understanding Terrorist Behaviour: The Limits and Opportunities of Psychological Inquiry," in W. Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 1990), 262.

non-Muslim societies, but they do not always lead to radicalisation. Among others, the author of 'Why Muslims Rebel' logically proved that the level of Islamists' violence in several Middle Eastern countries does not correspond to the level of the structural, especially socioeconomic, strains.⁶⁰ Another similar factor is that such strains do not always render Islamists violent; otherwise, the overwhelming majority of Muslims would have been militants. Even when these approaches are successful in explaining the nature of grievances in specific case studies, they cannot account for the level and scope of violence: national vs. international, revolutionary vs. pragmatic, limited vs. expansive or short vs. prolonged.⁶¹

The Political Process Approach/ Social Movement Theories

The Political Process approach has a great deal of similarity with social movement theories as it is based on the same central elements of social movement theories: political environment, mobilisation structures (resource mobilisation) and ideological frameworks (or framing in SMT). Investigating the wide range of social movement theories shows that the central components of classical and recent social movement theories evolve around the same elements.⁶² Thus, the political process approach can be described as the political version of SMTs. Despite having elements from the previous approaches, the political process approach is both distinct from and more dynamic and comprehensive than the above approaches. It builds on collective action/mobilisation theory that focuses on the effect of collective action/mobilisation as a mechanism within a given political environment in creating domestic violence. The collective action/mobilisation theory largely explains the mechanism of violence by considering mobilisation of the discontented people in the society crucial to the eruption of violence.⁶³

The Political Process Approach emphasises the importance of the political environment and the primacy of the process over the structural strains. It proposes that it is neither necessary for Islamists to be satisfied to become moderate nor enough for them to be deprived to become rebellious.⁶⁴ In Carrie Wickham words, "Even under the most extreme conditions of human

⁶⁰ Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel*.

⁶¹ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 47-9.

⁶² For further details on social movement theories and Islamist movements, see, e.g., Salwa Ismail, "Islamist Movements as Social Movements: Contestation and Identity Frames," *Historical Reflections* (30, no. 3 [Fall 2004]), 387 ff.

⁶³ See Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1978).

⁶⁴ Examples of this approach include: Carrie Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia Press, 2002); Mohammed Hafez, "From Marginalization to Massacres: A political Process

misery and exploitation, the emergence of collective protest is not assured.”⁶⁵ Therefore, the political process approach fills several gaps in the frustration-aggression approaches, especially their lack of dynamism and focus on causal-linear relationships.⁶⁶

The political process approach explores Islamist movements’ radicalisation by investigating the political environments in which they operate, the mobilisation structures through which they attain funds and support as well as the ideological tenets through which they justify or legitimise their actions. This is based on the triple elements of which the approach is composed: political environment, mobilisation structures and ideological frameworks. Thus, Islamism is perceived as the product of the correlation of political opportunities, mobilisation structures and ideological frameworks.⁶⁷

This approach is useful in explaining the mechanisms of violence witnessed by Egypt since the 1960s. The general discontent and frustration explained before took a practical form of opposition when it found groups of Islamists carrying similar beliefs and eager to put their ideas into action through a process of ‘mobilisation’ after they found mutual ‘interest’ and could ‘organise’ themselves and ‘mobilise’ their resources in their way to capture the available ‘opportunity’ and take the ‘action’ of armed struggle against the Egyptian regime.

Though more dynamic than other approaches, the political process approach is usually criticised for its too general components. Terms like ‘political environment’ and ‘mobilisation structures’ are too general to produce a general theory that encompasses the diverse ideologies and tactics of Islamism.⁶⁸ As will be shown later in this study, Islamists’ ideology may be considered too sacred to be violated or to be weighed by costs and benefits.⁶⁹ Thus, the element of mobilisation structures does not always work with Islamists who in several cases conduct their actions without taking into consideration their capabilities in comparison with those of the state or other opposing forces.⁷⁰

Explanation of GIA Violence in Algeria,” in Quintan Wiktorowicz, ed., *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 37-60.

⁶⁵ Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam*, 7.

⁶⁶ Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel*, 19-20; Ashour, “A World without Jihad,” 49.

⁶⁷ Ashour, “A World without Jihad,” 50.

⁶⁸ Ashour, “A World without Jihad,” 50.

⁶⁹ This is particularly clear in the revisions of al-Jihād Organisation, and it is fully substantiated in chapter four and in the conclusion of this dissertation.

⁷⁰ For examples of these, see Ashour, “A World without Jihad,” 51.

However, the ideological framework component of this approach, which is originally derived from the framing notion of social movement theories, proves quite useful for the purpose of this dissertation as it resonates well with and provides a useful analytical tool on the ideological religious concepts that the current study analyses. Therefore, it will be used as a theoretical tool of analysis in this study.⁷¹

The Political Culture Theory (Civilisational Approaches)

The political culture approach proposes that Islamism is based on two inherent characteristics in Muslims and Islam. The first is that Muslims have an acute religious and cultural identity that shapes their worldviews and reactions. The second is that Muslim political attitudes are shaped by Islamic texts and scriptures, which are general and vague enough to accept radical interpretations. This approach differs from the cultural defence hypothesis in that the latter is a structural crisis-based approach that traces Islamism to reactions of Islamists to cultural or political colonialism while the former traces it to the Islamic classical texts' inherent generalisation and openness to radical interpretations.⁷² Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilisations theory', which considers the notion of civilisational identity as the cause of clash between Islam and the West, can be included under this category.⁷³

The manifestations of the political culture approach are very common among Western political discourse and mass media. However, this approach lacks definitional and methodological accuracy: what is culture and how can it be fairly measured? Also, implicit in these explanations are sweeping unproven claims such as the assumption that religious and national identities are always strong among not only Islamists but also all Muslims. Another inherent claim is that political Islam is the natural product of these strong identities, whether national or religious, as

⁷¹ Details will follow in this chapter.

⁷² Examples of this approach include: Moorthy Muthuswamy, *Defeating Political Islam* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2009); J. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan, 1986); Gregory Davis, *Religion of Peace? Islam's War Against the World* (Los Angeles: World Ahead Publishing, 2006); Robert Spencer, *Religion of Peace? Why Christianity Is and Islam Isn't* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2007); Mordechai Kedar & David Yerushalmi, "Sharia Adherence Mosque Survey: Correlations between Sharia Adherence and Violent Dogma in U.S. Mosques," *Perspectives on Terrorism* (5, no. 56 [December 2011]), 81-138; Bernard Lewis, *Political Language of Islam* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991); Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985); Turner's book '*Religious Ideology*' can also be classified under this approach as it argues that Islamists' violence is a challenge to the hegemony of the U.S., and this comes from Muslims because of the incompatibility of Islamic beliefs with the U.S.-Led Western Hegemony.

⁷³ Samuel Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster Press, 1996).

well as the Islamic scriptures. Thus, this approach fails to show the assumed relationship between these identities and classical texts on the one hand and the Muslim political behaviour on the other hand.⁷⁴

More problematic is the overgeneralisation assumed by this approach. As argued by Edward Said, such sweeping generalisation and characterisations are unacceptable in light of the scope of such studies which comprises a very small part of what already happens in the Islamic World which “numbers a billion people, and includes dozens of countries, societies, traditions, languages, and, of course, an infinite number of different experiences”. Therefore, “It is simply false to try to trace all of this back to something called ‘Islam’.”⁷⁵

Textual Approaches

Textual or theological approaches intersect with political culture theories in that many of the scholars of the latter employ a textual approach to arrive at their conclusions. In this, they look at Islam as a ‘cultural system’ or ‘civilisation’ that inherently clashes with Western culture and civilisation. Proponents of these approaches argue that Islamism’s most effective tools lie in its ability to challenge peaceful interpretations of Islamic texts and render them into radical ones. The appropriation of Islamic symbols and lexis creates an option for various claims and counterclaims. Various interpretations of religious texts thus become an effective means of mobilisation and political change.⁷⁶

In this regard, there are two main camps of scholars. The ‘confrontationists’ or ‘essentialists’, such as Daniel Pipes, Martin Indyk, Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis, give prominence to the textual interpretation of Islam, which they consider an enduring and immutable insight into the ‘essence’ of Islam and the Muslim world. They see Islamism as a representation of the ‘essence’ of Islamic ‘civilisation’ or ‘culture’ which is, espoused by self-interests and an

⁷⁴ For a detailed critique of this approach, see Lisa Anderson, “Democracy in the Arab World: A Critique of the Political Culture Approach,” in Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, and Paul Noble, eds., *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 1: 77-92; Ashour, “A World without Jihad,” 42-3.

⁷⁵ Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How Media and Experts Determine How We see the Rest of the World* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), xvi.

⁷⁶ Textual approaches have been boosted in the post 9/11 climate. Knudsen notes that “there is a general tendency in academia to revert to Scripturalist scholarship and textual exegesis as a means of uncovering the hidden meaning of the Islamic revival and the roots of the fundamentalist revolt.” See Are Knudsen, *Political Islam in the Middle East* (Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute of Development Studies and Human Rights, 2003), 20. For more on this, see e.g., Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). For more on this approach see, for example, Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 4-5; Knudsen, “Political Islam in the Middle East,” 20-1.

antagonistic worldview, opposed to Western values and political thought.⁷⁷ The main methodological assumption is that the Muslim World is dominated by a set of relatively enduring and unchanging processes and meanings, to be understood through the texts of Islam itself and the language they generate.⁷⁸ Focusing on an antagonistic relationship between Islam and the West, proponents of this approach see Islamic revivalism as a danger that needs to be toppled before it turns into a fatal global threat.⁷⁹

Contrary to the previous camp, the 'accommodationists' or 'contingentists', such as John Esposito, James Piscatori and Edward Said, reject the notion that Islamic teachings are inherently antagonistic to the West or are a force of radical ideology. They reply to the confrontationists' views by focusing on the diversity of Islamic movements and the fact that they are shaped by contingent factors, hence the label 'contingentists'. By showing differences between various tendencies in Islamic movements, accommodationists debunk the confrontationists' claims and assert that Islam is far from being inherently anti-Western or anti-democratic. The whole puzzle lies in that Islam lends itself to various interpretations including democratic ones, and thus flexibility, rather than rigidity, is the norm within the 'Islamic culture'.⁸⁰

In his 'Orientalism and its critics', Fred Halliday proposes a third perspective, one in which there is an analysis of what actually happens in the Muslim world. He argues that the debate is largely about different 'representations' of the Muslim world. While one camp focuses on the role of texts and language in painting its 'essentialist' picture; the other camp focuses on 'discourses' about the region. Therefore both camps, Halliday notes, can be charged with ignoring what is actually occurring in the region.⁸¹

Therefore, although textual approaches play a great role in our understanding of the dynamisms of Islamists' thought, they have to be taken cautiously, in order to create a fair image of Islamism, and not be stripped of their broader economic and socio-political contexts.

⁷⁷ For more on this point and on other approaches on Islamism, see Knudsen, "Political Islam in the Middle East."

⁷⁸ Fred Halliday, "Review Article: The Politics of 'Islam'-a Second Look," *British Journal of Political Science*, (25, no. 3 [1995]), 401.

⁷⁹ Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 25. A critique of this was mentioned in the discussion of the previous approach.

⁸⁰ For more on this debate and classification, see Halliday, "The Politics of 'Islam'," 400-1; Michael Salla, "Political Islam and the West: A New Cold War or Convergence?" *Third World Quarterly* (18: [1997]), 729-31.

⁸¹ Fred Halliday, "'Orientalism' and its Critics," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (20, no.2 [1993]), 145-50.

While this study will use a primarily textual approach, as clarified below, it is worth noting here that this study differs from the above works in that it does not try to claim or find out whether Islamic teachings and texts are compatible or incompatible with the Western cultures and civilisations. It rather objectively sheds lights on how Islamic texts are interpreted by Jihadists to justify or retract violence, and the dynamics of these interpretations in religious textual terms.

This was a brief overview of the dominant literature on the political violence of armed Islamist movements. A general critique of this literature is highlighted by Randy Borum in a review of the main social science theories in the field and of post-9/11 conceptual models of the radicalisation process as well as post-9/11 empirical studies of radicalisation. Borum states, “each model remains underdeveloped: none of them yet has a very firm social-scientific basis as an established "cause" of terrorism, and few of them have been subjected to any rigorous scientific or systematic inquiry.”⁸²

As this dissertation discusses both violence and nonviolence, a brief overview of the dominant literature on the transformation of Islamist movements is given below.

On Transformation of Islamists

As the process of militant Islamists’ transformation is a recent development, writings about it are quite limited and less developed than writings on Islamist’s violence. This is also because most of the attempts to explain the transformation of militant groups into peaceful groups are individual studies and not meant for generalisation or the creation of a general theory. In an attempt to interpret transformations among some case studies of Islamism, academic works mentioned several arguments in this regard, building on other general theories of transformation.

Cooperation/ Inclusion Hypothesis

This approach is based on the general cooperation/inclusion hypothesis that is common in the literature on democratisation and transitions towards democracy.⁸³ It also makes use of the

⁸² Randy Borum, “Radicalization into Violent Extremism: A Review of Social Science Theories,” *Journal of Strategic Security* (4: no.4 [2011]), 15.

⁸³ See, e.g., Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore, Md., and London: Johns

traditional approaches of transformation or what is known as ‘harmony restoration hypothesis’ that interpret conflict transformation as a means of restoration of order and harmony of the community.⁸⁴ The ‘inclusion can lead to moderation’ hypothesis proposes that inclusion in the political process, cooperation with non-Islamist parties, involvement in the political process and/or receiving institutional incentives can lead to ideological moderation in Islamists’ political thought. In this process, moderates persuade radicals of the value of working within a democratic system and with other parties, as moderates themselves have increasing contact with diverse ideologies and worldviews.

This is in fact a reversal of the structural approach of state culture explained above. Thus, this hypothesis reverses the same linear causal relationship used by state culture approach on causation of violence. The main argument is that if Islamists rebel because of repression and exclusion, then they would change their directions if they are included in the political process and if the government cooperates with them.⁸⁵ The vast majority of the literature on the inclusion-moderation hypothesis highlights the ways in which institutions and political opportunities offer incentives for excluded groups to enter the system and abandon radical tactics and ideologies.⁸⁶

With regard to Islamist movements, this approach is used extensively in explaining the moderation of the Lebanese Hezbollah and some Islamist organisations in Jordan, Turkey and Yemen.⁸⁷ With the two groups covered in this dissertation, inclusion could mean the incentives offered by the state to encourage the militants to renounce violence and the strategic

Hopkins University Press, 1986); Robert Alan Dahl, *After the Revolution?* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970).

⁸⁴ For more on this, see Guy Oliver Faure, “Traditional Conflict Management in Africa and China,” in I. William Zartman, ed., *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict “Medicine”* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000), 163 ff.

⁸⁵ Examples of this include: Gurdun Kramer, “Islam and Pluralism,” in Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble, eds., *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World, Op. Cit.*; Glenn Robinson, “Can Islamists be Democrats? The Case of Jordan,” *Middle East Journal* (51, no. 3 [Summer 1997]), 373-88; Gunes Tezcur, “The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of Islamic Political Actors,” *Party Politics* (16, no. 1 [January 2010]), 69-88; Gunes Tezcur, *The Paradox of Moderation: Muslim Reformers in Iran and Turkey* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

⁸⁶ Schwedler, “Can Islamists Become Moderates,” 352.

⁸⁷ Examples of these are: A. Nizar Hamzeh, “Lebanon’s Hizbullah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation,” *Third World Quarterly* (14 [1993]), 321-36; Augustus Richard Norton, “Hizballah: From Radicalism to Pragmatism?” *Middle East Policy* (5 [1998]), 147-59; Mansoor Moaddel, *Jordanian Exceptionalism* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Taurus and Co., 2004); A. Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2004); Stacey Yadav, “Understanding ‘What Islamists Want’: Public Debates and Contestation in Lebanon and Yemen,” *Middle East Journal* (64, no. 2 [Summer 2010]), 199-213; Gunes Murat Tezcur, “The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of Islamic Political Actors,” *Party Politics* (16, no. 1 [January 2010]), 69-88.

calculations they employed to justify the transformation and maximise their available 'gains' and minimise 'losses'.

The main critique of this hypothesis is that it lacks both empirical evidence and clearly specified mechanisms for change. It does not provide a precise answer to the question: how and under what conditions does inclusion or cooperation lead to moderation? As shall be seen from the case studies of this dissertation, though some incentives are offered for the two groups to renounce violence, inclusion in the political process is rather limited or hardly existent. So, the inclusion-moderation hypothesis has a very limited impact in explaining the case studies of this dissertation. In her comparative research on Islamists in Jordan and Yemen,⁸⁸ Schwedler and Clark challenge this hypothesis and argue that Islamists' cooperation with leftists and other ideologically opposed groups is insufficient evidence of Islamists' ideological moderation. Rather, internal party debates must be investigated to see whether the boundaries of justification have been altered. Moderation therefore must be examined on a case by case basis.⁸⁹ Also, it has been argued that Morocco's Islamist Party of Justice and Development has continued to be moderate despite the reversal of earlier political openings offered by the state.⁹⁰ After all, this approach is based on the assumption that all Islamist movements are interested in political participation, even though one of the core principles of Jihadist groups is the refusal of democracy and political participation.⁹¹

Repression Hypothesis

In contradiction with the previous approach, the repression hypothesis argues that Islamists change their directions when they undergo severe repression with a limited incentive of political accommodation in the electoral process. An example of this approach is the argument advanced by Mona El-Ghobashy in her explanation of the ideological moderation of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.⁹² Excessive repression has been considered by Omar Ashour as one of the main

⁸⁸ Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁸⁹ For more details on the argument of Schwedler and Clark, see Janine Clark, "Conditions of Islamist Moderation: Unpacking Cross-Ideological Cooperation in Jordan," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (38, no. 24 [November 2006]), 541-2.

⁹⁰ Eva Wegner and Miquel Pellicer, "Islamist Moderation without Democratization: The Coming of Age of the Moroccan Party of Justice and Development?" *Democratization* (16, no. 1 [February 2009]), 157-8.

⁹¹ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 53.

⁹² Mona El-Ghobashy, "The Metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (38, no. 3 [August 2005]), 373-95.

reasons for transformation of the two groups of this dissertation as will be discussed below in detail. Also, the moderation of Turkey's Islamists was considered as a case of 'exclusion leading to moderation'.⁹³

However, as argued by the political process proponents,⁹⁴ the causal linear relationship does not rightly reflect the causes of either radicalisation or transformation of Islamists, though it might be successful in explaining some cases. Moreover, the space between inclusion and transformation is unaccounted for and thus the mechanisms by which Islamists transform are kept largely unspecified.⁹⁵ As explained before, repression could lead to radicalisation while the repression-moderation hypothesis states that repression could lead to moderation. This raises the still inadequately answered question: when does repression lead to moderation and when does it lead to radicalisation?

The Political Process Approach/ Social Movement Theories

Likewise, the political process approach/ SMTs are utilised to explain the transformation of Islamists. An example of this is Carrie Wickham's study about the transformation of the Egyptian al-Wasat Party, wherein she utilised the political process approach to find out how cross-ideological cooperation could lead to Islamists' moderation. According to Wickham, Islamists' beliefs have moderated as a result of the learning process that occurs through the interactions between Islamists and secular opposition leaders as they pursue common goals. Wickham argues that while Islamist leaders could have adopted certain political positions for purely instrumental purposes, those attitudes eventually "metamorphosed into matters of principles."⁹⁶

However, Wickham acknowledges that there is a tension between the al-Wasat Party's religious and democratic commitments, but for Wickham, these are issues for which political learning has not yet taken place. Thus, she concludes that the reasons behind the transformation of al-Wasat Party are political learning and strategic calculations.⁹⁷ The core

⁹³ Berna Turam, *Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement* (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2006), 6.

⁹⁴ See, e.g., Mohammed Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel?* 19-20.

⁹⁵ Clark, "Conditions of Islamist Moderation," 342; Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 54.

⁹⁶ Carrie Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's Wasat Party," *Comparative Politics* (36, no. 2 [January 2004]), 219.

⁹⁷ Wickham, "The Path to Moderation."

difference between Wickham's study and that of Schwedler is that the latter sees cross-ideological cooperation as an effect of shifting ideological commitments, while the former views cooperation as a mechanism that produces ideological moderation.

In her PhD dissertation, Dalia Fahmy utilised the political process approach to account for the moderation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a case study of Islamist movements. She concluded that moderation of the MB is the result of the political process that involves interplay between three variables: political inclusion, internal organisation of the movement and ideological frames choice.⁹⁸

The political process approach has also been utilised by Omar Ashour to explain the causes of transformation of several Islamist movements including the two groups under discussion. As Ashour's contribution is the most relevant and most comprehensive academic work on the topic, it will be reviewed in detail. In his study, Ashour tried to answer two main questions: why do radical Islamists revise their ideologies, strategies and objectives and initiate a de-radicalisation initiative? And under what conditions will this process be successful?

To answer these questions, Ashour analysed three Egyptian groups (the Muslim Brotherhood, the IG and al-Jihād) and two Algerian cases (The Islamic Salvation Army and the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat). The first Algerian case represents an example of de-radicalisation success while the second case represents an example of de-radicalisation failure. Based on these cases, Ashour proposes that four interdependent variables are necessary for the success of any de-radicalisation process: repression, selective inducements, social interaction, and leadership. If any of these four variables is missing, the de-radicalisation process will not succeed.

So, a combination of state repression directed against leaders and members, selective inducements offered by the state to these movements to renounce violence, social interaction between different levels of the movement (internal interaction) as well as between the movement and the 'other' (external interaction), and charismatic leadership in control of its followers are all necessary for the initiation and success of any de-radicalisation process. State repression and interaction with the 'other', Ashour argues, affect the ideas and the behaviour of the leaders of a radical organisation who start changing their beliefs and worldviews after calculating the costs and the benefits. After that, the leadership initiates a de-radicalisation

⁹⁸ Dalia Fahmy, "Muslim Democrats: Moderating Islam, Modifying the State," (PhD dissertation, Rutgers University, 2011).

process when the state offers selective inducements. Then the leaders start to have internal interactions with the grassroots in an effort to convince them with de-radicalisation. Ashour stresses that the four variables are 'necessary' for the success of any de-radicalisation process and that this hypothesis "can also explain the de-radicalization processes of other armed Islamist movements elsewhere and possibly the de-radicalization of armed groups in general."⁹⁹

Ashour's study is an original contribution to our understanding of the causes of transformation of armed Islamist movements. However, the stress on the necessity of interaction between the four variables is neither uncontested nor always necessary. This could have been the case had the findings of the study been confined to its selected cases only, but the study is in fact trying to lay a general hypothesis for the transformation of Islamists, a process which would definitely lead to unfilled gaps in the arguments due to the inevitable differences between various Islamist movements.

Regarding leadership, for example, the study emphasises that "[T]he charismatic leadership of an armed Islamist organisation seems to be the decisive factor in the success or the failure of any de-radicalization process."¹⁰⁰ Though it is undeniable that leaders have great influence on their followers and are, in most cases, the main drivers of a de-radicalisation process, this is not always the case. To mention only one example, the Salafi Jihadists of Mauritania renounced their previous violent beliefs and vowed to quit violence forever upon long sessions of arguments and theological debates with scholars who are neither their leaders nor affiliates of any other Salafi-Jihadi movement.¹⁰¹ Also, many small Salafi-Jihadi factions joined the de-radicalisation process of al-Jihād Organisation in Egypt though they are neither affiliated to al-Jihād Organisation nor cognisant of the leaders who wrote the theological arguments rationalising the process of de-radicalisation.

Schwedler argues that it is not necessarily the case that "only a charismatic leader can advance persuasive justifications; it is the process of *engaging* in debates about ideological commitments—and collectively agreeing to adhere to the outcomes of internal votes on the substantive issues being debated—that can produce ideological moderation."¹⁰² Other variables

⁹⁹ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 295.

¹⁰⁰ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 298.

¹⁰¹ Muḥammad A' māri, "Al-Diddū: Aqna'nā al-Salafiyyīn bi Tark al-'Unf," *Al-Jazeera Website*: <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/504D20DC-D842-431D-A173-2206F9455BC7.htm> (Last accessed 13 November 2015).

¹⁰² Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates," 360.

may also be questioned. Repression, for example, is arguably a major reason for radicalisation. Considering it as a reason for de-radicalisation requires an answer to the ensuing question: when does repression lead to radicalisation and when does it lead to de-radicalisation? Though some insights into this are provided,¹⁰³ the answer still needs more substantiation.

The third variable of 'social interaction' between the leaders and the 'other'¹⁰⁴ is also contestable. 'The other' refers to the more radical *takfīrīs*, some liberals and Leftists intellectuals, and may be some religious scholars. Such interaction has very limited, if any, effect on the leaders. As Ashour's study itself reports in another place, several attempts of reconciliation were made and several scholars visited the leaders of the Egyptian movements and debated with them their ideas and ideologies. They were always depicted as state-agents or sympathisers. When it comes to the leftists or liberal intellectuals, they were, and are still, dismissed by these groups even after de-radicalisation. The change these movements have undergone in this regard is no more than moderating their rhetoric regarding these liberals and ceasing to depict them as infidels or apostates, which does not mean they have accepted their ideas or have taken them into consideration.

Moreover, though selective inducements, the fourth variable introduced by Ashour, can have some effect, it cannot be taken as an incentive of de-radicalisation while the ideology is still unchanged. As this study will show with the revisions of al-Jihād Organisation, selective inducements can encourage the militants under repression to revise their thoughts but never make them adopt something they are unconvinced of. So, inducements come as supporting incentives, not initiators, of already running ideological shifts. Also, in the most successful case of de-radicalisation, the IG leaders declared their non-violence initiative in 1997 without any inducements or cooperation from the state. Inducements came later on after 9/11 attacks when the Egyptian regime changed its policies and decided to prove to the West it could successfully rehabilitate 'terrorists'.¹⁰⁵

Moreover, though Ashour's study established its arguments on the political process approach, the overwhelming majority of the arguments depended on the political environment element of

¹⁰³ Ashour admitted that repression is a primary reason of radicalisation but argued that repression can lead to de-radicalisation only when accompanied with the other three variables he mentioned. See Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 33-5.

¹⁰⁴ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 29.

¹⁰⁵ Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 622-3.

the political process approach and, to some extent, on the mobilisation structures. However, comparatively very little attention was paid to the 'ideological framework' element, which constitutes the third component of that approach. Thus, the employment of the political process approach is incomplete as the study did not sufficiently explain how the ideology integrated with other variables to initiate the whole process of de-radicalisation.

Lastly, the current study will prove that, on the ideological and behavioural levels, there is a great difference between the revisions of the IG and al-Jihād though both of them have undergone the four variables of Ashour and are considered by Ashour as successful behavioural and ideological de-radicalisation cases. This variation in the revisions of the two groups proves that the four variables do not work for all cases that undergo the same conditions. Despite all of these remarks, Ashour's work fills a wide gap in the literature and provides great insights into our understanding of Islamists' transformation.

Ashour also offers a helpful framework for evaluating various groups' differences by examining three dimensions: ideology, behaviour and organisational capacity. He divides de-radicalisation into three types: ideological, behavioural and organisational. Ideological de-radicalisation is defined as a process in which a violently radical group "reverses its ideology and de-legitimizes the use of armed methods to achieve political goals while also moving towards an acceptance of gradual social, political and economic changes within a pluralist context."¹⁰⁶

He defines behavioural de-radicalisation as, "abandoning the use of violence as a tactic to achieve political goals, without a concurrent process of ideological de-legitimization of violence".¹⁰⁷ Organisational de-radicalisation refers to the process that follows ideological or behavioural de-radicalisation and involves "dismantling the armed units of the organisation, which includes discharging and dismantling their members without splits, mutiny or internal violence."¹⁰⁸ However, the last two types of Ashour's classification are problematic as they, by definition, mean that groups who stopped violence because they had become incapacitated, totally defeated, overwhelmingly deterred or fragmented, such as the Egyptian al-Jihād in 1995, can be defined as 'de-radicalised'.

¹⁰⁶ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 175.

¹⁰⁷ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 175.

¹⁰⁸ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 175.

Taken in various combinations, Ashour's three dimensions produce three distinct paths for de-radicalisation. If the three processes are achieved as in the case of the MB and the IG, this is called 'comprehensive de-radicalisation'. If the ideological and behavioural dimensions are achieved, but the organisational de-radicalisation is not achieved, this is called 'substantive de-radicalisation', which involves a successful de-radicalisation only on the ideological and behavioural levels. Ashour counted al-Jihād Organisation as an example of substantive de-radicalisation because though the majority of the organisation has been 'substantively de-radicalised', other factions still follow al-Qaeda and reject de-radicalisation.¹⁰⁹ The third and last combination of Ashour's categories is 'pragmatic de-radicalisation', which involves successful behavioural and organisational but not ideological de-radicalisation. An example of this is the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front and the militias affiliated with the Tajik Islamic Renaissance Party.¹¹⁰

Thus, Ashour counts the IG as an example of comprehensive de-radicalisation and al-Jihād as an example of substantive de-radicalisation that has happened on both behavioural and ideological levels. The findings of the present study will approve Ashour's thesis on the IG but will disprove his assumptions regarding al-Jihād. As this study is concerned mainly with ideology, it will assess the revisions of the two groups as per the definition of ideological de-radicalisation given by Ashour. It will argue that for a movement to become ideologically de-radicalised, the core ideas that the group previously used to justify violence need to be reversed or retracted. This is particularly the case in this study as both groups under discussion behaviourally stopped violence long before their revisions, and those of them who went through the revision process had no arms to lay down at the time of the revisions.¹¹¹ Thus the other two types of de-radicalisation as defined by Ashour do not factually apply to the members of the two groups who accepted revisions, though obviously behavioural abstention from physical acts of violence after revisions is necessary to prove the sincerity of the ideological retractions.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 175; Ashour, *De-Radicalization of Jihadists*, 6.

¹¹⁰ Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 175.

¹¹¹ Only ex-fellows of al-Jihad Organisation abroad had arms and they were not part of the revisions process and are thus excluded from the arguments on revisions. Details of this are given in chapter two on the history of the two groups. Thus, Ashour's classification of al-Jihād's revisions as substantive because part of the group did not lay down arms is inaccurate as those who made the revisions had no arms and those who had arms were not part of the revisions. Also, his classification of the IG revisions as comprehensive as they laid down arms is irrelevant as they had no arms at the time of revisions and there is no information available on any physical process of laying down arms.

¹¹² Another book titled *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* also speaks about government-sponsored individual and collective de-radicalisation and disengagement programs in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Europe. The book is

Not far from the political process approach and Ashour's findings, Matesan examined four Islamist movements in Egypt and Indonesia. For the Egyptian cases, she examined the MB and the IG, but not al-Jihād Organisation. She employs a process-tracing approach to explain the causal mechanisms of what she calls violent escalation and de-escalation. The main argument of the thesis is that violent escalation is a slippery slope that emerges from the interaction of grievances caused by external factors (repression, low domestic policy convergence and salient threats to the Ummah) with intra-organisational competition over authority and public norms of resistance. De-escalation occurs when organisational crisis and widespread public condemnation of the group lead to a re-evaluation of the cost of violence and a re-thinking of their overall mission and vision.¹¹³

She concludes that "[W]hile religious justifications might play an important role for mobilisation, violent tactics are adopted when there is a broader precedent for violence in society, which is unrelated to the issue of religious interpretation and justification, or when there are organisational pressures are more powerful catalysts for the adoption of violent tactics than simply the adoption of a hard-line religious interpretation."¹¹⁴ By organisational dynamics, Matesan is referring to strength and cohesion. Strength refers primarily to the capacity of the organisation, like having resources, adherents and mobilisation potential. Cohesion refers to the extent to which there is a unitary line of command and whether there are factions within the organisation or competition over authority. This also depends on the presence of a strong leader capable of unifying and controlling the group and imposing authority.

Thus, she generally notes that violence is primarily driven by the logic of grievances, and de-escalation is driven by the logic of disillusionment. For the IG in particular, she argues that high levels of repression coupled with strong public condemnation of the group led to widespread disillusionment with the cause, which created an organisational crisis and in turn led to de-

mainly concerned with providing some tips and policy recommendations for the U.S. government on how to de-radicalise or disengage Islamist militants. It provides some useful general information about de-radicalisation programs worldwide and some broad brush tips on how to make de-radicalisation successful for U.S. goals, but does not introduce any new specific coherent methodology or framework of analysis about the process of de-radicalisation itself or details on the ideological component of it. In addition to emphasising some oft-quoted reasons like repression, crisis, incentives and leadership, the main argument is that efforts to de-radicalise Islamist extremists should have affective, pragmatic, and ideological elements, as well as aftercare programs. Religious discussions should be led by a credible figure, and the practical support offered should be extended to ex-militants and their families. See Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*.

¹¹³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation."

¹¹⁴ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 381.

escalation of violence.¹¹⁵ While Matesan's thesis successfully explains causal mechanisms of violence and non-violence and gives more attention to and emphasis on the role of ideology, it fails to show the impact of the tenets of ideology on external causal reasons and it lacks depth and sufficient details of ideology as it employs only secondary sources in its general overview of the IG and the MB literature.

Literature on the Transformation of Egyptian Militants

The previous section covered literature on de-radicalisation or moderation of Islamists in general, while this section covers the literature on de-radicalisation of the Egyptian militants in particular. In addition to Matesan and Ashour's works, a limited number of works on Egyptian militant Islamists' transformation have been written. In her 2015 study on the revisions of the IG and al-Jihād, Dina Al Raffie also notes that "Since Ashour's study, there have been few follow up studies carried out on the Egyptian Islamist militants."¹¹⁶

In his 2015 essay titled "Assessing Islamist Armed Groups' De-Radicalization in Egypt", Drevon comments on the scope of the literature on this topic, stating, "This academic corpus is nonetheless still inadequate to fully comprehend the ramifications of these revisions, considering the absence of research based on rich primary sources and interviews with these groups' members and leaders."¹¹⁷ This deficiency is what the present study aims to fulfil and what gives it merit over other studies in this field. Some of the works on the topic are in English.¹¹⁸ However, the majority of these are in Arabic and take the form of news articles¹¹⁹ and

¹¹⁵ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 384.

¹¹⁶ Dina Al Raffie, "Straight from the Horse's Mouth: Exploring De-Radicalization Claims of Former Egyptian Militant Leaders," *Perspectives on Terrorism* (9, no. 1 [2015]), 27.

¹¹⁷ Jérôme Drevon, "Assessing Islamist Armed Groups' De-Radicalization in Egypt," *Peace Review* (27: no. 3 [2015]), 296. This was also noted by earlier studies, such as Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 158.

¹¹⁸ Examples of these are the following articles, which also do not discuss the ideological or theological content in detail. Gerges's article discusses only the non-violence initiative of the IG in 1997. It does not touch upon the literature or any further developments. It merely examines the means by which the government has overcome the Islamist threat and the implications of continuing governmental exclusion of the Islamist movements from political life. See Fawaz Gerges, "The End of the Islamist Insurgency in Egypt? Costs and Prospects," *Middle East Journal* (54, no. 4 [Autumn 2000]), 592-612. Gunaratna & Bin Ali's article describes the de-radicalisation process of the IG and al-Jihād Organisation without providing a contextual background of violence or revisions, or suggesting a testable hypothesis or general framework of research or analysis. See Rohan Gunaratna & Mohamed Bin Ali, "De-radicalization Initiatives in Egypt: A Preliminary Insight," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (32, no. 4 [2009]), 277-91. Jackson's article traces the evolution of the IG thinking and examines some aspects in its new stances, especially its critique of contemporary Jihadism. See Sherman A. Jackson, "Beyond Jihad: The New Thought of the Gamā' alislāmiyya," *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture* (1, no. 1 [March 2009]), 52-68. Stein's article examines the IG as a group that has tried to shape patterns of civility and act as an interface between the Egyptian state and the society. See Ewan Stein, "An Uncivil Partnership: Egypt's Jama'a Islamiyya and the State after the Jihad," *Third World Quarterly* (32, no. 5 [2011]),

archival interviews.¹²⁰ Some of these interviews were collected and published in a book form.¹²¹ Some books included a chapter on the social analysis of the positions of al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya in their first four books included under the series of *Taṣṣīḥ al-Mafāhīm*.¹²² Like other secondary sources, none of the Arabic secondary sources was devoted to providing a detailed analysis of the IG or al-Jihād Organisation's ideological and religious attitudes.

863-81. Drevon's article is an 8-page essay that lacks references of its material. It was published in 2015 and it presents some reflections on the revisions of the two groups based mainly on interviews with some leaders and members of both groups. The essay proposes that group-centred de-radicalisation differs substantially from individual renunciation of violence as its success is primarily contingent on organisational dynamics and on the preservation of a group's internal unity, rather than on the reintegration of former militants into their societies. It also proposes that renunciation of violence cannot be isolated from the broader context in which an armed conflict with the state takes place. See Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization." Kamolnick's article explores Faḍl's critique of al-Qaeda as a great potential tool for discrediting jihadist thoughts. After presenting Faḍl's specific allegations and Sharia proofs against al-Qaeda, the article draws implications for U.S. counterterrorist messaging, focusing particularly on the utility of wielding this theological-juridical approach as compared to other 'counter narrative' approaches, and the vital need to accurately characterise Islamism and its relation to terrorism. See Paul Kamolnick, "Al Qaeda's Sharia Crisis: Sayyid Imam and the Jurisprudence of Lawful Military Jihad," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (36, no. 5 [2013]), 394-418. Lahoud's article reviews some of Faḍl's old and new views and argues that there is a great shift and stark contradiction between Faḍl's old writings and his new ones, and questions Faḍl's failure to definitely clarify the relation between his earlier and recent writings and his reluctance to admit that his new writings are revisions or that his old writings were mistaken. Therefore, it depreciates the significance of his writings and dismisses the view that his revisions will have a significant impact on Jihadism. See Nelly Lahoud, "Jihadi Recantations and their Significance: The Case of Dr Fadl," in A. Moghadam, and B. Fishman, eds., *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, and Ideological Fissures* (London: Routledge, 2011), 138-57. Another article by Lisa Blaydes and Lawrence Rubin offers an historical overview of the revisions of the IG, and a very brief review of those of al-Jihād. It provides a description of their views on jihad, *taḳfīr* and *ḥisba*. The article is highly descriptive and concludes by saying that the authors cannot causally attribute the groups' decision to lay down arms to ideological reorientation as opposed to other regime actions like repression. However, the Egyptian experience is highly suggestive as it indicates that the ideology of Islamist groups is not exogenous and fixed, but is rather endogenous and flexible. The Egyptian experience also shows that ideological reorientation may be more effective at stemming militancy in the long run compared with rival approaches. See Lisa Blaydes and Lawrence Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation and Counterterrorism: Confronting Militant Islam in Egypt," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (20, no. 4 [2008]), 461-79. Another article by Amr Hamzawy and Sarah Grebowski provides a generalised description of the revisionist attitudes of the IG and al-Jihād towards the state, politics, and society, and how they eventually agreed on the nonviolent interpretations of the MB. They conclude that Jihadi revisionism has led both groups to forego violence and has shifted Egypt's Islamist spectrum towards moderation. Yet, the revisions of al-Jihād are less developed than those of the IG because the revisions of al-Jihād are quite recent and need more time to develop. See Amr Hamzawy and Sarah Grebowski, "From Violence to Moderation: Al-Jama'a al-Islamiya and al-Jihad," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (2010). Available at: http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de:8080/receive/HALCoRe_document_00008333?lang=de (accessed 14 January 2016).

¹¹⁹ Examples of these include: Jamāl al-Banna, "Jamāl al-Banna Yaktub: *Wathīqat Muḥāwalat al-Tarshīd: Mā Lahā wa mā 'alayhā*," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yawm* (Online. [5 Dec. 2007] Downloaded 6 January 2011); Yusrī al-Gharabāwī, "Al-Murāj'āt min al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād," procedures of Al-Murāj'āt min al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād symposium at Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Istrātijyya, *Islamonline.net* (Online: [5 July 2007] Downloaded 06 June 2011); Sherīf Ḥilmī, "Azhariyyūn Yu'aīyydūn al-Duktūr Faḍl wa Yakhshawna al-Ḍawāḥirī: Ṭanṭawī wa al-Muftī Yarfūḍān al-Ta'līq biragham Ḥuṣūl al-Kitāb 'alā Muwāfaqat Majma' al-Buḥūth," *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (Kuwait [30 Nov. 2007]), 8.

¹²⁰ Examples of these are the interviews conducted by Makram Muḥammad Aḥmad with leaders and members of the IG, which he published in al-Muṣawwir Magazine.

¹²¹ See, e.g., Makram Muḥammad Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāj'a: Ḥiwār ma'a Qādat al-Taṭarruf fī Sijn al-'Aqrqāb* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq al-Dawliyya, 2003).

¹²² Ḍiyā' Rashwān, ed., *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt al-Islāmiyya fī al-'Ālam*, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Ahrām, 2006).

The greatest deal of these writings cover only the description of the event, the history of the two groups,¹²³ the reactions to these revisions, their effect on the broader jihadi trend and speculations on whether or not the revisions were sincere.¹²⁴

As the majority of these sources discuss the sincerity of the revisions and whether they were written as genuine convictions or under coercion in addition to the possible effect of these revisions on the jihadi movement worldwide, these sources will be discussed under the general titles: 'reactions' and 'impact on Jihadists'. So the following section provides a literature review of the majority of Arabic sources on the revisions of the two groups in addition to informing the reader of how the revisions were received and reacted to. The reactions towards and the impact of the revisions of each of the two groups will be discussed separately, starting with the IG as their revisions took place first.

Reactions

The revisions of the two groups have sparked many controversies over their nature and political implications. "Many observers have branded these revisions a deceiving tactical move to break out of prison....On the other hand, a few academics have conversely endorsed a more optimistic outlook, and stressed that collective de-radicalization demonstrates that militant Islamist ideologies can be reinterpreted by former proponents of violence, and serves as a guideline for broader renunciations of violence by militant groups evolving in other contexts."¹²⁵ Thus, in addition to giving a detailed review of the existing literature and arguments on the revisions of the two groups, this section gives a broader idea on how the local and international community received and interacted with the revisions, and thus enhances our understanding of the revisions, their background and people's perceptions of them. It shows how actors within the collective action arena and concerned commentators and observers who engage with this reality construction work are involved in the politics of signification.

¹²³ See, for example, Salwā Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya al-Musallaḥa fī Miṣr 1974-2004* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq al-Dawliyya, 2006).

¹²⁴ See, for example, 'Abd al-Raḥīm 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā: Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf bayna Rihān al-Ḥukūma wa al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya* (Cairo: Markaz al-Maḥrūsa li al-Nashr wa al-Khadamāt al-Ṣaḥafiyya wa al-Ma'lūmāt, 2002).

¹²⁵ Devron, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 296.

The IG

Though the IG declared its initiative in 1997, the government did not interact with it except after 2001. The Egyptian regime's indifference to and then interaction with the IG initiative generated different reactions. Some observers considered the revisions as a manoeuvre; some considered them as a consequence of coercion by and/or a deal with the government, while others opined that the revisions are the product of a genuine change in the beliefs and attitudes of the IG. Based on this, the reactions generated in this regard can generally be categorised into the following three main categories:

1- Deal

Some writers and journalists, such as ' Abd al-Raḥīm 'Alī and Haytham Jabr, considered the IG revisions a deal with the government and not a genuine change in the beliefs and attitudes of the IG.¹²⁶ The deal entails that the IG renounces its violence and stops criticising the Government in return for the release of its members from prison and giving them a margin of freedom. Such a deal was made at that particular time because the IG and the government shared mutual interest to stop violence at that point for different reasons. The proponents of this view argued that this was confirmed by the fact that a large number of the IG members were released from prison and rehabilitated.¹²⁷

2- Pressure

The proponents of this attitude do not claim that there is a deal between the IG and the government, but they argue that the revisions are the outcome of the governmental pressure on the IG. Yet, they differ on the way they interpret this pressure. Some Islamists consider that the IG has renounced its cause in order to relieve the governmental pressure; and some other Islamists consider that the IG has been obliged to retract but did not forsake its cause. Other non-Islamists interpret this as a success to the governmental iron-fisted policy which has been able to neutralise the IG.

For example, during the early days of the initiative, the governmental newspaper al-Ahrām published several articles and comments that depict the initiative as a manoeuvre by a terrorist group and that it arouses the suspicion of the government security forces. According to the

¹²⁶ See, e.g., Haytham Jabr, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya wa Azmat Niẓām Mubārak," *Egyptian Socialist Centre*: <http://www.e-socialists.net/node/1087> (accessed 11 October 2011); 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*."

¹²⁷ See e.g., 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*. For more details on this, see al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 171.

newspaper, the initiative was planned by the IG lawyer Muntaṣir al-Zayyāt who visited all the leaders abroad and asked some of them to support the initiative while others should reject so that the new attitudes would not be looked at as a result of a deal. In another article, the newspaper stated that the initiative came only after the security forces succeeded in putting a halt to the activities of the Group through security raids and prevention of communication and funding to the 'terrorists'.¹²⁸ Examples of Jihadists who argued in favour of the pressure view include Abū Ḥamza al-Maṣrī¹²⁹ and Hānī al-Sibā'ī.¹³⁰

3- Genuine Convictions

The proponents of this view argue that the revisions are the result of a genuine change in the theological convictions, beliefs and orientations of the IG, and not the product of pressures or deals. They consider the revisions as the product of the theological studies of the leaders. This view was less prevalent in the early days of the initiative but became the most dominant as time passed and the IG kept constant on its new stances, supporting them with several writings. The IG members and leaders and the governmental security officials all confirm that the revisions are genuine changes in the convictions of the IG. Outside this circle, the pro-regime journalist Makram Muḥammad Aḥamd was the first to support this view and defend the IG as he was allowed by the regime to attend the IG teaching and discussion sessions that were conducted to activate the initiative. He made several interviews with the IG members and leaders and published them in four long articles in the pro-regime magazine al-Muṣawwir. He then collected the four articles along with some other material and published them in his book *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*.¹³¹ In addition to the IG and the government, several Islamists and intellectuals supported this interpretation. Examples include the Muslim Brotherhood¹³² as well as several intellectuals, thinkers and analysts.¹³³

¹²⁸ See a summary of the two articles in 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf, Taḥawwulāt al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Aṭlas li al-Nashr, 2005), 99-100

¹²⁹ See Abū Ḥamza al-Maṣrī, "Qalīl min al-Ḥayā' wa al-Inṣāf yā Qādat al-Jamā'a," *Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād*: <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=u4n2rhg5> (19 October 2011). For a detailed discussion of al-Maṣrī's attitude, see al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 101-4.

¹³⁰ See, e.g., Hānī al-Sibā'ī, "Ḥiwār Jarīdat al-Dustūr ma'a al-Shaykh al-Duktūr Hānī al-Sibā'ī," *Al-Dustūr Newspaper*, republished at al-Sibā'ī's website: http://www.almagreze.net/ar/articles_read.php?article_id=227 (19 October 2011).

¹³¹ See Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 27-136.

¹³² For comments of several MB leading figures on the IG revisions, see Ḥamdī 'Abd al-'Azīz, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya: 'Ashrat A'wām 'alā al-Murāja'āt," *Amn Fiikri website*: <http://www.amnfiikri.com/articles.php?action=show&id=804> (19 October 2011).

¹³³ Examples include Ḍiyā' Rashwān, Waḥīd 'Abd al-Majīd, 'Amr al-Shubakī and Rafīq Ḥabīb who are all Egyptian thinkers and experts in Islamist movements. This also includes previous Jihadists such as Kamāl Ḥabīb and Muntaṣir

As the above review shows, the majority did not believe in the genuineness of the IG revisions when they were first announced in 1997. Yet, nowadays there is little doubt as to the genuineness and sincerity of the IG anti-violence views. The volume and depth of the IG anti-violence literature greatly exceed any expected effort that would be needed to arrive at a deal with the government or skip a governmental pressure, and it does reflect a genuine rethinking of the Group's ideology.¹³⁴ In practical terms, the IG has not committed any act of violence since 1997, and none of its members has committed any breach in this regard after they were released from jail.¹³⁵ The fact that the revisions of the IG are the real choice of the IG leaders is acknowledged even by Jihadists such as Ayman al-Ṣawāḥiri, despite their severe criticism of the revisions, considering them as a retraction from jihad and a betrayal to Islam.¹³⁶

Al-Jihād Organisation

As will be discussed later in this dissertation, the revisions of al-Jihād are much more limited and controversial than those of the IG. These revisions were written by the Jihadist ideologue Sayyid Imām who is more known as Dr. Faḍl.¹³⁷ The rest of al-Jihād members just approved and signed their acceptance of the arguments of what Faḍl has written. However, some of the views of Faḍl on some core issues such as God's sovereignty and *takfīr* are ambiguous. This, along with the strong links of al-Jihād Organisation with al-Qaeda and the weight of Faḍl in the jihadi circles, provoked extensive reactions and polemic among Islamists and observers of Islamist

al-Zayyāt. The views of these and other intellectuals and experts can be found, e.g., in Ibrāhīm 'Arab, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya Tamudd Yad al-Muṣālaḥa li al-Dawla al-Miṣriyya," *Al-Ḥaqīqa al-Dawliyya Newspaper* (14 July 2007), republished on Muntaṣir al-Zayyāt website: http://www.elzayat.org/show_files_20.htm (20 October 2011); Ḥamdī 'Abd al-'Azīz, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya bi Miṣr lā Tawba walā Ṣafqa," *Amn Fikrī website*: <http://www.amnfkri.com/articles.php?action=show&id=1141> (20 October 2011).

¹³⁴ Y. Carmon et al, "The Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya Cessation of Violence: An Ideological Reversal," *MEMRI* (No. 309 [22 December 2006] available at: <http://www.memrijttm.org/content/en/report.htm?report=1802¶m=IDTA> (Last Accessed 16 December 2015).

¹³⁵ Omar Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 617; M. Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence in the Revisions of the Egyptian Islamic Group," (MA Dissertation, SOAS, University of London, 2009), 24-5.

¹³⁶ Before the ideological content of the IG revisions was published and before the government adopted the revisions, al-Ṣawāḥiri criticised the IG leaders and acknowledged that their revisions reflected their own thoughts. See Ayman Al-Ṣawāḥirī, *Firsān Taḥta Rāyat al-Nabiyy* (n. p: al-Saḥāb Media, n. d., Ms Word version available at: <http://www.tawhed.ws,190-236>, downloaded on 14 May 2011).

¹³⁷ Faḍl published his writings under three different names, but all of his publications would be mentioned in the footnotes under the name of Faḍl. The original name printed on each publication can be found in the bibliography with a note that says that this name refers to Faḍl.

movements. Generally speaking, the reactions on al-Jihād revisions can be classified under the following categories:¹³⁸

1- No Comment

Some High-ranking official religious authorities in Egypt such as, the Grand Sheikh of al-Azhar at that time, Muḥammad Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī and the former mufti of Egypt ‘Alī Jum‘a declined to give any comment when they were questioned about their options on the revisions.¹³⁹ Nonetheless, some other scholars from Al-Azhar supported the revisions.¹⁴⁰

2- Support

In Egypt, the majority accepted and appreciated the revisions of al-Jihād. This includes members and leaders of the IG,¹⁴¹ the Muslim Brotherhood,¹⁴² many analysts and thinkers,¹⁴³ as well as most of the jailed and freed ex-Jihadists.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, the revisions were lauded by several Arab¹⁴⁵ and internationals¹⁴⁶ commentators and analysts who expressed their optimism on the revisions and their impact on international jihadi violence. Those who supported the revisions without critical comments considered them as a strong reversal and a stark condemnation of

¹³⁸ This section on reactions to Faḍl’s revisions is based mainly on my discussion of these reactions in my MA thesis. See Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 14-18.

¹³⁹ Ḥilmī, “Azharīyyūn Yu‘aiyydūn al-DuKtūr Faḍl.”

¹⁴⁰ Ḥilmī, “Azharīyyūn Yu‘aiyydūn al-DuKtūr Faḍl,” Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 15.

¹⁴¹ See, for example, Kamāl Ḥabīb, “Sayyid Imām mina al-‘Udda ilā al-Naṣīḥa,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (18 November 2007), 12; Munṭaṣir al-Zayyāt, “Al-DuKtūr Faḍl Taqaddama ḥīna Taqā‘asa al-Ākharūn,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (18 November 2007), 13; Kamāl Ḥabīb, “Yakfī al- Murājāt Binā’ Tayyār Jāmi’,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (21 November 2007), 13; Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, “*Wathīqat Tarshīd al-Jihād wa al-Ard al-Mumahhada li al-Ḥarth*,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (23 November 2007), 9.

¹⁴² Muhammad Bahā’, “Al-Ikhwān Yatabar’ūn min Taṣrīḥāt Murshidihim al-Sābiq wa Yu‘linūn Sabqahum Muraja‘āt al-Jihād,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (28 November 2007), 12.

¹⁴³ See, for example, Rafīq Ḥabīb, “Al- Murājāt Idāfa li al-Waṣāṭiyya al-Islāmiyya,” Interview published in *Islamonline.net* ([5 December 2007] (no longer available Online [accessed 9 June 2011])); al-Banna, “Jamāl al-Banna Yaktub.”

¹⁴⁴ See, for instance, Nizār Ghurāb, “Al-Qiyādī al-Jihādī Nizār Ghurāb li al-Jarīda: ‘Abbūd al-Zumur Yad’am al-Murājāt wa al-Maṭlūb al-Samāḥ li al-Jihād bi al-‘Amal al-Siyāsī.” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (3 December 2007), 13.

¹⁴⁵ Examples include the Tunisian thinker Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Jurshī and the Iraqi analyst Jawād al-Khalṣī. See Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Jurashī, “Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Jurashī: Al-Murājāt Mubādara Tantazir al-Taswīq,” Interview by ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṭaḥāwī, *OnIslam Website*: <http://www.onislam.net/arabic/islamyoon/armed-action/103394-2007-12-26%2010-35-51.html> (accessed 24 October 2011); Jawād al-Khalṣī “Al-Khalṣī: al-Jihādīyya al-Miṣriyya Manba’ ‘Unf al-‘Irāq,” Interview by ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṭaḥāwī, *OnIslam Website*: <http://208.43.71.196-static.reverse.softlayer.com/arabic/islamyoon/armed-action/103839-2008-01-17%2010-31-40.html> (24 October 2011).

¹⁴⁶ Examples include Frank Cilluffo, Rohan Gunaratna and Lawrence Wright. See Frank Cilluffo, quoted in Eli Lak, “Senior Qaeda Theologian Urges His Followers to End Their Jihad,” *The Sun*: <http://www.nysun.com/foreign/senior-qaeda-theologian-urges-his-followers/68433/> (25 October 2011); Gunaratna, quoted in Lake, “Senior al-Qaeda Theologian,” Lawrence Wright, “*The Rebellion Within: The Radical Challenge to al-Qaeda’s Ideology*,” *Annual Reports of the U.S. Counterterrorism Office* (30 July 2008).

violent movements like al-Qaeda by one of its main ideologues as well as a straightforward call for cessation of Islamists' violence against local regimes. However, some other analysts had an opposing view.¹⁴⁷

3- Rejection and Disparagement

A limited number of jailed al-Jihād Organization members and some members of al-Qaeda have vetoed the revisions of Faḍl and considered them a wicked attempt to stop jihad for the benefit of Western and America interests. Media coverage of these debates between Jihadists who support the revisions and Jihadists who reject them shows that the debate assumed personal subjective directions. Supporters such as Faḍl and Nabīl Naʿīm depict their critics of several shortcomings such as hypocrisy and acting as agents for foreign or regional security apparatuses. On the other hand, the detractors such as al-Ḍawāhirī and al-Sibāʿī depict the supporters of being agents to the Egyptian security apparatus or of retracting under coercion. In a clip available on Jihadi website, al-Ḍawāhirī attacked the revisions of Faḍl even before they were published and noted that they were the product of torture and pressure, depicting Faḍl as “a ruined, desperate person who is looking for a way-out from prison.” and his revisions as ‘a call to a new American religion.’¹⁴⁸ Later on, al-Ḍawāhirī published a lengthy book of approximately 92000 words entitled *al-Tabrīʿa* (The Exoneration) to rebut Faḍl's views.¹⁴⁹ Other al-Qaeda-related figures or sympathisers such as Muḥammad al-Ḥakayma¹⁵⁰ and Hānī al-Sibāʿī¹⁵¹ expressed similar views. The lengthy response of al-Ḍawāhirī and other al-Qaeda supporters would indicate that al-Qaeda has taken Faḍl's revisions seriously and was greatly alarmed by the consequences they might have on the foundations of their violent ideology.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 15.

¹⁴⁸ Al-Jarīda, “Al-Ḍawāhiri Hājama Shaykhah fī Risāla Istabaqat al-Murājʿāt wa Waṣafahu biʿannahū Munhār Yāʿīs Yabḥath ‘an Makhraj mina al-Sijn,” *Al-Jarīda* Newspaper (19 November 2007), 12.

¹⁴⁹ Ayman al-Ḍawāhirī, *Al-Tabrīʿa: Risāla fī Tabrīʿat Ummat al-Qalam wa al-Sayf min Manqashat Tuhmat al-Khawar wa al-Ḍaʿf*. N.P.: al-Sahāb li al-Intāḡ al-ʿIlāmī, 2008..

¹⁵⁰ For the reaction of al-Ḥakayma and al-Ḍawāhiri before the Faḍl's book on revisions was issued, see al-Jarīda, “Al-Ḍawāhiri Hājama Shaykhah.”

¹⁵¹ He is an Egyptian Islamist refugee in London who heads al-Maqrīzī Centre for Historical Studies. On his website al-Sibāʿī always publishes articles that support the jihadi thought, See Hānī al-Sibāʿī, “Taʿlīq Awwalī ‘alā Wathīqat Tarshīd al-ʿAmal al-Jihādī,” *Markaz al-Maqrīzī li al-Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhiyya*: <http://www.almagreze.net/ar/news.php?readmore=96> (27 October 2011).

¹⁵² Terrorism Focus, “Al-Qaeda's al-Zawahiri Repudiates Dr. Fadl's 'Rationalization of Jihad',” *Terrorism Focus*. (17 [30 April 2008]), 3-4; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 16.

4- Still Radical

The fourth category of responses argues that Faḍl is still having his previous radical views concerning rebellion as he wants to stop violence merely for pragmatic reasons as he argues that violence brings more harm than benefits. This means that he has not renounced his beliefs regarding violence and therefore if violent operations become successful, he will promote them. ‘Abd al-Rahīm ‘Alī¹⁵³ and Ṭāhā Jābir al-‘Alwānī¹⁵⁴ are examples of supporters of this view. Al-‘Alwānī, for example, noted that Faḍl’s revisions “cannot be considered revisions, *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), or even a smell of *Fiqh*.”¹⁵⁵ As armed rebellion against the state is the main issue in Faḍl’s revisions, the above views rely in their overall evaluation of the revisions only or mainly on this issue.¹⁵⁶

To avoid repetition, further details and investigations on whether or not the revisions of Faḍl were written under duress will be provided in the following chapter. The second most discussed aspect on the revisions in the secondary sources literature is the influence of the revisions on other jihadist groups. This is what the following section covers.

Influence of the Revisions on other Jihadists¹⁵⁷

In their discussion on expected influence of the revisions on international Jihadist Movements like al-Qaeda, analysts pay more attention to the revisions of the al-Jihād than to those of the IG because of the weight of Faḍl in the jihadi circles and the fact that al-Jihād members, unlike those of the IG, have the strongest ties with al-Qaeda. As a result, the effect of the IG revisions is discussed in passing while the focus is mainly on the effect of Faḍl's revisions. In this regard, there are different opinions regarding the effect of revisions on international jihadi movements. The views in this regard can be categorised under the following three categories:

¹⁵³ ‘Abd al-Rahīm ‘Alī, “Mulāḥazāt Manhajīyya ‘alā Murājāt al-Jihād,” *Al-Sharq al-Awsat Newspaper* (10 December 2007), republished on the author's website: http://www.abdelrahim.com/arabic_page_08_11.html (14 October 2011).

¹⁵⁴ This means that they still consider armed action a duty, but they have stopped practising it because they are incapable of doing it.

¹⁵⁵ Ṭāhā Jābir al-‘Alwānī, “Al-Faqīh wa al-Mufakkir al-DuKtūr Ṭāhā Jābir al-‘Alwānī fī Ḥiwārih ma’a Islamonline.net (1& 2)” Interviewed by Islām Farahāt, *OnIslam website*: <http://www.onislam.net/arabic/fiqh-a-tazkia/fiqh-papers/8079/102991-2007-12-06%2016-11-51.html> (18 October 2011).

¹⁵⁶ Ibrahim, “Kiohadists Quit Violence,” 17.

¹⁵⁷ The link between this section and the rest of the chapter is that this section shows and reviews large part of the writings on the issue. The information in this section on the influence of Faḍl’s revisions on al-Qaeda is based on my MA thesis. See Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 19-21.

1- Considerable Influence

Several analysts, thinkers and affiliates of Egyptian ex-Jihadist movements opined that the revisions could have a significant impact on other Jihadists including al-Qaeda. Some of them went as far as hoping that Faḍl's revisions could cause al-Qaeda to revise its thought, or result in creating internal splits or weakness among the supporters of al-Qaeda.¹⁵⁸ However, they concede that revisions alone cannot halt violence worldwide. For example, the Jihadist leader Aḥmad Yūsuf Ḥamdallah emphasized that the *Wathīqa* constitutes a 'tsunami' in the Jihadi thought.¹⁵⁹

Some researchers like Omar Ashour categorised al-Qaeda into three sections. The first section which comprises the second-in-line leaders around al-Qaeda leaders is unlikely to be influenced. The second section that comprises al-Qaeda's affiliates in countries like Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Of these, the Egyptian branch is most likely to be influenced due to the prestigious scholarly position of Faḍl and because of the IG revisions. The third layer which includes 'internet militants' or 'self-recruited members' would be influenced the most.¹⁶⁰ Unlike Ashour, Ḍiyā' Rashwān sees that the first section would be influenced the most as they know Faḍl and appreciate his writings more than the other two sections.¹⁶¹

This view finds itself on that al-Jihād Organisation is strongly connected to al-Qaeda, for its members were the founders and main reason behind the establishment of al-Qaeda. This view also supports itself by arguing that Faḍl is a chief Jihadi ideologue who is a highly perceived amongst Salafi Jihadi movements in general and al-Qaeda in particular. Because al-Qaeda's tends to market its violent ideology to its followers and sympathisers using Islamic theological

¹⁵⁸ See for instance, 'Āṣim 'Abd al-Mājid, "Al-Qiyādī al-Bārīz li al-al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya 'Āṣim 'Abd al-Mājid li al-Jarīda: Li Murāj'āt Sayyid Imām al-Kalima al-Akhīra fī Fiqh al-'Unf al-Jihādī," Interviewed by Aḥmad Sa'd. *Al-Jarīda Newspaper*. (3 December 2007), 12; Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, "Wathīqat Tarshīd al-Jihād wa al-Arḍ al-Mumahhada li al-Ḥarth," *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (23 November 2007), 9. An example of this in academic writing is Kamolnick, "Al Qaeda's Sharia Crisis."

¹⁵⁹ Aḥmad Yūsuf Ḥamdallah, "Aḥmad Yūsuf Ḥamdallah 'Uḍuw Majlis Shūrā al-Jihād: Wathīqat Sayyid Imām Tsunāmī fī Fikr al-Jihād. Al-Ajyāl al-Qādima Satata'thar bi al-Murāj'āt wa 'Utālīb Bin Lādin wa al-Zawāhirī bi Qirā'tihā bi Ta'nnī," Interviewed by Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (25 November 2007), 12; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 19.

¹⁶⁰ Ashour, "Impact of Egyptian Islamist Revisionists on Al-Qaeda," 13.

¹⁶¹ Ḍiyā' Rashwān, "Kayfa Satu'ththir al-Murāj'āt 'alā al-Ḥāla al-Jihādiyya al-Dawliyya," *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (2 December 2007), 13; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 19.

justifications, countering this by Faḍl, the IG and similar groups would influence some of al-Qaeda's affiliates, potential recruits and sympathisers.¹⁶²

Rabasa et al summarises this view:

These critiques by former radicals can lead extremists to question their beliefs in addition to deterring those who may be at risk of radicalization. Moreover, there may be a tipping point: When enough ex-militants denounce radical Islamism, that ideology and the organizations that adhere to it are fatally discredited. Even short of this tipping point, as greater numbers of militants renounce extremism, radical Islamist organizations will experience greater hurdles in attracting adherents and sympathizers within the Muslim community.¹⁶³

2- Limited Influence

Jihadist leaders and al-Qaeda sympathisers, such as al-Ḥawāhirī and al-Sibā'ī, emphasise that the revisions of Faḍl will have extremely minor influence because Jihadi movements believe that any scholar could make a mistake and because they believe such 'retractions' are the product of coercion.¹⁶⁴ That view that the influence of the revisions is limited is also expressed by some analysts and researchers like Nelly Lahoud who argues that if revisions had an impact on Jihadists, why is it that the responses of Jihadists have been to denounce rather than to obey Faḍl's new writings?¹⁶⁵ Khalil al-Anani argues that the revisions will have little effect because violence is not driven by the intellectual factor. Instead, violence is driven by structural reasons such as the socio-political and economic conditions. These conditions together create a sound environment for the violent current to exist. Thus, ideological ideas are not the driving factor of violence.¹⁶⁶ This point of view also relies on the fact that some new ideologues, such as Abū Muḥammad al-Maḥdī, have taken the lead in theorising for violence after Faḍl. Therefore,

¹⁶² Ashour, "De-Radicalization of Jihad," 11-14; Rashwān, "Kayfa Satu'ththir al-Murāj'āt." Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 19.

¹⁶³ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 30.

¹⁶⁴ Al-Sibā'ī, "Ta'līq Awwalī;" al-Ḥawāhirī, *Al-Tabrī'a*, 10.

¹⁶⁵ Lahoud, "Jihadi Recantations and Their Significance," 154.

¹⁶⁶ Khalil al-Anani, "In Focus: Jihad Revisions: Is it too late?" *Dailystaregypt*: <http://www.dailystaregypt.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=10511> (19 October 2011). For the article in Arabic, see al-Anani, "Murāj'āt 'al-Jihādiyyīn' wa Yūtubiya inhā' al-'Unf," *Al-Arabiya.net*: http://www.alarabiya.net/save_pdf.php?cont_id=42523 (19 October 2011).

Faql's writings no longer constitute a significant part of the Jihadi literature as they were replaced by writings of new ideologues.¹⁶⁷

3- Shaking but not Collapsing

Some researchers such as Rafiq Ḥabīb¹⁶⁸ and Hānī Nusayra¹⁶⁹ contend that the revisions shall merely shake violent groups without leading to their demolition for violence is engendered by multiple reasons, such as structural factors including injustices and socioeconomic problems, so religious justifications constitute only a fraction of these reasons. Lawrence Wright, e.g., argues that it is "unlikely that Al Qaeda will voluntarily follow the example of the Islamist Group and Zawahiri's own organization, Al Jihad, and revise its violent strategy. But it is clear that radical Islam is confronting a rebellion within its ranks, one that Zawahiri and the leaders of Al Qaeda are poorly equipped to respond to."¹⁷⁰ Thus, all views, albeit different, concede that revisions alone cannot cause international violence to collapse, and they also agree that Faql's new stances will somehow influence the global jihadi thought. However, they diverge on the extent and magnitude of that influence.¹⁷¹

As violence is the product of several socio-political, economic and structural factors in addition to the intellectual and ideological factor, it is more likely that violence will continue as long as these factors continue, though the revisions may influence the ideological factor feeding violence and cause some sort of recalculations and reconsiderations of some Jihadists in dealing with the unpleasant wider context. Revisions may also have an impact on discouraging potential freelance Jihadists or jihadi sympathisers who may not be members of any group, but are supportive of Jihadism because they share the same ideology or common grievances. However, the appearance of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and its expansion to different countries practically substantiates the 'little effect' view as Islamists' violence has increased internationally.

¹⁶⁷ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 20.

¹⁶⁸ Ḥabīb, "Al-Murāj'āt Iḍāfa li al-Waṣā'iyya al-Islāmiyya."

¹⁶⁹ Hānī Nusayra, "Murāj'āt al-Jihād Khalkhala bilā Hadm li al-Fikr al-'Anīf," *OnIslam.net*: <http://208.43.71.196-static.reverse.softlayer.com/arabic/islamypoon/armed-action/103214-2007-12-15%2012-29-27.html> (13 October 2011)

¹⁷⁰ Lawrence Wright, "The Rebellion within; a Reporter at Large," *New Yorker* (84. no. 16 [2June 2008]).

¹⁷¹ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 21.

Revising one's beliefs and ideas is a complex process that takes multiple factors into consideration and needs a long period of time, particularly if it is undertaken by a large group of people who have different thoughts, concerns and interests. Thus, the effect of the revisions, particularly on local violence, cannot be immediate and needs a long time to become apparent. The greatest immediate merit of the revisions, however, is that they have provoked an extensive ideological, theological and political discussions and debates amongst the jihadi circles about the central issues and tenets according to which violence is justified. Such discussions and debates constitute a challenge from within and are healthy phenomenon and important step that will have implications on the ideological theorisation of violence perpetrated by militant Islamist movements.

Though the revisions of the IG are less effective on the international level because the IG is a local organisation and its activists do not have strong ties with al-Qaeda, they are effective on the national and regional levels. On the national level, the revisions of the IG have opened the gate for other militant groups and individuals in Egypt to renounce violence. This is clear in al-Jihād's revisions which were inspired and encouraged by the success of those of the IG. Furthermore, the revisions of the IG were adopted by some minor jihadi cells that carried out attacks in Sinai in 2004 and 2005. Leaders of the IG explained the ideological content of their revisions to the members of these cells who accordingly renounced violence and followed the IG new thought. This contributed to the success of the government in preventing further attacks in Sinai Peninsula. On the regional level, the revisions of the IG were taken as a model in other countries such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Algeria, Yemen, Tajikistan, Malaysia and Indonesia as these countries had militant groups or individuals who similarly declared their renouncement of violence.¹⁷²

In addition, revisions of the IG have the merit of being the first, of being unilaterally declared by the IG without being requested by the regime and of being the ones that produced the most prolific writings and argumentations against violence.¹⁷³ In addition, the detailed theological evidences presented by the revisions of the IG provide counter arguments to the jihadi thought

¹⁷² Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, "Ḥiwār ma'ā al-Duktūr Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm 'Uḍw Majlis Shūrā al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya" interviewed by Aḥmad al-Sharīf, *Al-Sakina Website*: <http://www.assakina.com/center/meetings/5814.html> (23 October 2011).

¹⁷³ Ibrāhīm, "Ḥiwār ma'ā al-Duktūr Nājiḥ."

targeting new recruits, which would in the least mitigate or alleviate the influence of that thought. This may dissuade some of the new recruits away from the jihadi camp.

As the above reviews show, most of the writings on violence and the transformation of Islamists pay little attention to the ideology or theological component of the whole process, though it is the axis around which violence and revisions spin. Therefore, ideology will be the main focus of the current study, which will try to fill the lacunae in the literature regarding this point. This is further motivated by the following illustration on ideology.

Why Ideology?

This section defines ideology and explains why this study focuses more on ideology than on other factors. While there is no agreed-upon definition of ideology, Lyman Sargent defines ideology as a “system of values and beliefs regarding the various institutions and processes of society.”¹⁷⁴ The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy defines ideology as “any wide ranging system of beliefs, ways of thought and categories that provide the foundations of programmes of political and social actions.”¹⁷⁵ Ideology helps to attract recruits, legitimises a group’s use of violence, and helps maintain group solidarity. It does so by providing a description for the current world order, a picture of a preferred future, and an explanation of how to realise the aspired objectives.¹⁷⁶ Ideologies have a high potential for mass mobilisation, manipulation, and control. Therefore, they are ‘mobilised beliefs’.¹⁷⁷ Thereupon, Freeden notes that those who construct ideologies are engaged in the manufacturing of history and also claim universal validity that arises out of the need for a simplified marketable account of reality and the desire for control and power over others.¹⁷⁸ Ideology provides a relatively durable set of ideas that define parameters for what is conceivable among movement adherents. Deeply rooted ideological beliefs can construct individuals’ world-views, thereby influencing the kinds of cognitively recognised options that are available in responding to different conditions.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Lyman Sargent, *Contemporary Political Ideologies* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2009), 2.

¹⁷⁵ Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 185.

¹⁷⁶ Froukje Demant et al "Decline and Disengagement: An Analysis of Processes of Deradicalisation," *Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies* (Amsterdam [2008]), 113.

¹⁷⁷ See Mostafa Rejai, *Political Ideologies: A Comparative Approach* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), 11.

¹⁷⁸ Michael Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 6-7.

¹⁷⁹ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 208.

Ideology is crucially important to militant movements. It is a tool through which movements describe themselves and the world around them, and distinguish their 'in-group' from 'out-groups'. Ideology is an instrument of opposition and contestation that provides movement adherents with a 'cognitive map' that filters the way social realities are perceived. These maps render that reality easier to grasp and more coherent, and thus more meaningful. Ideology therefore offers some measure of security and relief in the face of ambiguity— particularly in times of crises. Ideology plays several functions. It raises awareness to adherents and explains why social, political, or economic conditions are as they are. It helps establish a group identity by juxtaposing the out-group's allegedly harmful traits with certain positive traits that supposedly characterise actual or potential adherents of the ideology. It mostly attributes blame for the in-group's dilemma on some out-groups whose behaviour allegedly undermines the well-being of the in-group. It also offers a course of action that is cited as the remedy to the in-group's predicament, and it exhorts adherents to implement that course of action.¹⁸⁰

Jihadist ideology performs these functions by re-explaining and raising awareness of the past; Jihadists argue to Muslims that Islam is in a state of decline. They identify the alleged source of the Muslims' plight in the persistent attacks on Muslims by an anti-Islamic alliance of 'apostates', 'Crusaders', and 'Zionists'. They attempt to create a new identity for their adherents by offering them membership in a global community of like-minded believers. Moreover, like other ideologies, jihadist ideology presents a program of action, namely violent 'jihad'.¹⁸¹

Thus, ideology is crucial in understanding the religious principles and founding beliefs of any organisation. It shapes the vision and goals of Islamist groups and influences the way their rivals are perceived and the context is interpreted. As studying their ideology enables us to better understand the mind-set of Islamist organisations, the formative texts of these groups should receive as much, if not more, attention as the strategies and tactics they employ.

Within the literature on Islamism, there is a dispute on whether or not religious ideas constitute a causal factor in motivating people towards the use of violence. There are three views in this regard. The minimalist view is the dominant view in the field as can be seen from the literature review above. Scholars representing this view argue that religious ideas are not a significant causal factor and that religious rhetoric is often a post hoc justification for violence. Therefore, they either give more prominence to external materialistic causal factors or argue that Jihadists

¹⁸⁰ Moghadam and Fishman, *Fault Lines in Global Jihad*, 6.

¹⁸¹ Moghadam and Fishman, *Fault Lines in Global Jihad*, 6.

are not actually religious during the course of their radicalisation.¹⁸² This is also the view of Jillian Schwedler in her review of some academic works on the moderation of Islamist Movements. She believes that “moderation may have little to do with religion and everything to do with historical power struggles and local contexts.”¹⁸³

Yet, the assertions about the lack of religiosity of Jihadists are made without any sort of framework for making such determinations. They are made on an ad hoc basis, without the use of any systematic evaluation or objective measurable means by which one could evaluate whether these individuals were religious or not. Therefore, “[E]valuation of religiosity comes down to the subjective judgment of researchers.”¹⁸⁴ Maryann Love notes that both politicians and major academics “consistently and spectacularly get religion wrong in world affairs.”¹⁸⁵

The maximalist view sees ideology as the main causal factor and considers Islam as a religion, and not any particular subset of Islam, to be the fundamental force driving those who turn to violence.¹⁸⁶ As the argument that Islam in general is the fundamental problem is mostly written for a popular rather than academic audience, this view is well represented in popular discourse on the subject and has asserted itself in Western policy debates and the mass media.¹⁸⁷

The middle ground view argues that religious ideology is a very important causal force in driving people towards jihadist violence, but they ascribe that to the Salafi Jihadist ideology rather than to Islam as a whole.¹⁸⁸ Another field of contention among those who acknowledge the role of

¹⁸² Examples of works that support this view include: Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Robert Pape & James Feldman, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010); Jessica Stern, *Deradicalization or Disengagement of Terrorists: Is it Possible?* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 2010); Borum, “Radicalization into Violent Extremism,” McCauley & Moskalenko, *How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*; Mueller, *Terrorism Since 9/11*.

¹⁸³ Schwedler, “Can Islamists Become Moderates,” 354.

¹⁸⁴ Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 32. See detailed discussion and critique of the minimalist view in Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 32-45.

¹⁸⁵ Maryann Cusimano Love, *Beyond Sovereignty: Issues for a Global Agenda* (4th edition, New York: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011), 172.

¹⁸⁶ In addition to the works cited above under the political culture and textual approaches, examples of this view include: Mordechai Kedar & David Yerushalmi, “Sharia and Violence in American Mosques,” *Middle East Quarterly* (18, no. 3 [Summer 2011]), 59-72; Robert Spencer, *The Truth About Muhammad: Founder of the World’s Most Intolerant Religion* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2006); Robert Spencer, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2005); Serge Trifkovic, *The Sword of the Prophet* (Boston: Regina Orthodox Press, 2002); Paul Fregosi, *Jihad in the West: Muslim Conquests from the 7th to the 21st Centuries* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998).

¹⁸⁷ For details and examples of this, see Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 28-30.

¹⁸⁸ Examples of this view in post 9/11 literature include: Mary Habeck, *Knowing the Enemy: Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); Mitchell D. Silber & Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York City: NYPD Intelligence Division, 2007); Assaf Moghadam, *The Globalization*

ideology is the extent to which religious interpretations and ideological beliefs cause violence. Some see religion and culture as autonomous forces that directly shape group behaviour.¹⁸⁹ Others recognise the legitimising and mobilising power of religion, but ascribe the emergence of Islamist groups and their strategic choices also to the broader socio-political and economic contexts.¹⁹⁰ Even within this last view that acknowledges the importance of both ideology and context, there is a disagreement over the level of importance and the space that ideology consumes in relation to the context. In this regard, Khaled Hroub, for example, concludes in his edited volume on context versus ideology that the ideology of Islamist groups “remains significant, but mainly at a rhetorical level, thinly concealing politics and responses that are formed by the contextual reality.”¹⁹¹

Despite this fierce contention over the role of religion or religious ideology, there is a consensus that understanding what motivates people to join the Salafi Jihadist Movement is important. Such an understanding is fundamental to be able to accurately describe the movement.¹⁹² This is where part of the value of this dissertation becomes clear. Understanding the ideas that motivate people to undertake religiously justified violence or retract from violence is of paramount importance in fashioning organisational and state-level policies that can minimise the attraction of violent Islamist movements and help avoid policies or ideas that pose a major risk of strengthening it.

The causal role of religious ideas is usually misunderstood because, as explained by Scott Appleby, the paradigm for understanding religion and political violence is doomed by two extremes. He argues:

Recent debates about the roles of religion in deadly conflict find analysts gravitating toward one of two extremes. Some follow in the tradition of religion’s cultured despisers, pointing to incidents of religious terrorism or to the religiously inspired atrocities in conflict settings like the Balkans as evidence that religion is inherently opposed to progress, threatening a return of the Dark Ages.

of Martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion;” Matesan, “Violent Escalation and De-escalation.”

¹⁸⁹ See, e.g., Walid Phares. *The War of Ideas: Jihadism Against Democracy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

¹⁹⁰ See, e.g., John Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); John Esposito, “Terrorism and the Rise of Political Islam,” in Louise Richardson, ed., *The Roots of Terrorism* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Mark Juergensmeyer, “Religion as a Cause of Terrorism,” in *The Roots of Terrorism*, Ed. Louise Richardson (New York: Routledge, 2006); Mark Juergensmeyer, *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al Qaeda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

¹⁹¹ Khaled Hroub, ed., *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology* (London: Saqi, 2012), 9-10.

¹⁹² Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 149.

Others, including secularists who are friendlier to organized religion, as well as many religious officials themselves, expect it to uphold the humanist credo, including the proposition that human life is the highest good, the one inviolable reality. These proponents of enlightened religion tend to explain away acts of terrorism, murder, and sabotage committed in the name of religion. This is not Islam, this is not Christianity, this is not Sikhism, they contend, precisely because the act and agents in question violate the sanctity and dignity of human life (e.g., unconditional obedience to God's law).¹⁹³

Appleby boldly describes this either/or method of analysing the role of religion as 'patently absurd', arguing that both views are reductionist, as the sceptics of religion overlook "the profoundly humane and humanizing attributes of religion," while the other view makes the converse error by failing "to consider that an authentic religious precept—a sincere response to the sacred—may end in subordinating human life to a higher good."¹⁹⁴ Based on that, Gartenstein-Ross asserts that "as long as religion is so crudely understood, it is easier for the extraordinarily poor justifications for regarding religion as marginal that dominate the scholarship to go unchallenged: religious ideas, quite simply, are not treated with the same rigor as academics treat other topics."¹⁹⁵

Likewise, as the religious ideology of revisionists is mainly built on cost-benefit analysis, understanding the ideology becomes crucial; for without explaining the new ideology and understanding the importance emphasised by Islam on continuously evaluating the costs and the benefits of any action on the Muslim community, it is difficult to grasp the real importance of evaluating the effectiveness of violent or nonviolent tactics in their broader social context - for it may lead to confusing a nonviolent ideology with a pacifist strategy.¹⁹⁶

Thereupon, of the three views on the importance of ideology, the arguments and conclusions of this dissertation support the middle ground view and show the importance of ideology in taking the decision to support or retract violence. The fact that several Islamist movements have renounced violence and argued against the Salafi Jihadist ideology using Islamic theological arguments gives more weight to this view and indicates that the problem is not with Islam as a

¹⁹³ Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 10.

¹⁹⁴ Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 10.

¹⁹⁵ Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," 151.

¹⁹⁶ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 67-8.

religion but with this particular ideology/ interpretation of Islam known as Salafi Jihadism. It also suggests that moderate interpretations of Islam can be one of the most effective tools in neutralising violent ideologies.

Stephen Biddle rightly argues that ideology is the centre of gravity and the tool used to rally support for religiously inspired terrorists, arguing that the real enemy in the war against terrorism is not terrorism itself, but radical ideology; as terrorism is only a tactic. Therefore, unless the ideology is defeated, counterterrorist efforts will inevitably fail.¹⁹⁷ This is what is generally termed in literature as a 'war of ideas' or 'the battle for the hearts and minds'.¹⁹⁸

The literature review above shows that most of the writings on violence of Islamists focus on causal external factors while paying minimal attention to the ideology or moral legitimisation or de-legitimisation of violence. The same applies to Social Movement Theory literature. In this regard, Quintan Wiktorowicz notes that ideology received little treatment in the dominant SMT framework. "In the haste to conceptualise social movements as constituted by rational actors responding to opportunities and threats, scholars have downplayed the ideational motivation for collective action, often portraying it as epiphenomenal to contention. Typically, ideas are incorporated into dominant models only in so far as they constitute a cultural resource for framing, and in many cases collapsing, 'ideology' and 'frame' into a single concept such as 'ideological frames'."¹⁹⁹

Furthermore, Rogan notes,

[I]t is essential that we strive to understand the ideological underpinnings of radical Islamic terrorist groups in order to investigate potential mechanisms for engaging this conflict. Towards that end, greater attention must be given to what is written and what is said by the leaders of these groups; which is mostly absent in extant communication-based research... Though individual acts of terrorism can be extremely destructive, it is the promulgation of an ideology of intolerance for pluralism, equality, and respect for the sanctity of human life, along with a jurisprudence for the wilful

¹⁹⁷ Stephen Biddle, "War Aims and War Termination," in Colonel John R. Martin, ed, *Defeating Terrorism: Strategic Issue Analyses* (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2002), 7-8.

¹⁹⁸ See, e.g., Thomas R. Mockaitis, "Winning Hearts and Minds in the War on Terrorism," in Thomas R. Mockaitis and Paul B. Rich, eds., *Grand Strategy in the War Against Terrorism* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 28-9; Muhammad Haniff Bin Hassan, "Key Considerations in Counterideological Work against Terrorist Ideology," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (29: no. 6 [2006]), 534.

¹⁹⁹ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 208.

destruction of self and others, grounded in a premise of divine truth that is perhaps most dangerous. Understanding this ideology is the challenge confronting policymakers and scholars of communication.²⁰⁰

Even writings which consider ideology as an important causal factor either overgeneralise and/or do not explain the details of that ideology and how it is utilised to justify or retract violence. After reviewing some works that spoke about violent ideology in general terms, Matesan rightly notes, “None of these works that have examined the religious underpinnings of Islamist violence have expanded their analysis to also study the recent ideological revisions of groups that have denounced violence.”²⁰¹

While there is a limited number of writings on the ideology of Jihadists in general and al-Qaeda in particular,²⁰² there is no work devoted to the detailed explanation of the ideological concepts of the two groups under discussion, nor are there any writings that explain and analyse the details of the religious ideology of ex-Jihadists who have renounced violence and the ideological and theological dynamics of these changes. In addition, authors of extant writings on jihadist ideology, as in the case of Habeck for example, only draw the general image without paying attention to details and are evidently untrained in Islamic studies or theology, and therefore they rely almost completely on English language secondary sources in discussing the ideological concepts of Jihadists.²⁰³ This lack of training and expertise in Islamic studies and lack of use of primary Arabic sources often lead to a broad-brush approach, a certain lack of depth and some inaccuracies.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, the lack of theological training deprives authors of these works

²⁰⁰ Randall Rogan, "Jihad against Infidels and Democracy: A Frame Analysis of Jihadist Ideology and Jurisprudence for Martyrdom and Violent Jihad," *Communication Monographs* (77, no. 3 [2010]), 411.

²⁰¹ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 45.

²⁰² Examples of these include: Habeck, *Jihadist Ideology*; Ahmed S. Moussalli, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992); Jansen, *Creed of Sadat's Assassins*; Turner, *Jihadist Ideology*.

²⁰³ This also applies to the limited discussion of ex-Jihadists' ideologies in some of the recent literature that considers ideology as a major causal factor, yet but gives only a flat, excessively short and depth-lacking overview of the tenets of this ideology based merely on secondary sources; e.g., Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation."

²⁰⁴ For examples of such inaccuracies, see William Shepard, "Review of: Knowing the Enemy: Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (39, no. 1 [February 2007]), 137. An example of these inaccuracies in the writings about the revisions of the two groups under discussion is Drevon's assertion that the IG did not comprehensively revise their former theological commitments regarding "the most contentious issue pertained to the excommunication of a nominally Muslim head of state who does not apply Islamic law comprehensively." See Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 301. This study will show that the IG has completely reversed its ideology in this regard.

from paying more attention to details, from a proper evaluation of the theological arguments and from an adequate evaluation of the theological appeal or legitimacy behind them.

This problem is also identified by both Maryann Love and Gartenstein-Ross, who argued that lack of religious training is evident in arguments advanced by scholars that misunderstand basic religious rules. Having identified some examples of the mistakes committed by scholars due to lack of religious training, Gartenstein-Ross argues, “This lack of training may accentuate scholars’ tendency toward projection: religion is not an important motivating force for most Western scholars, so they assume that this must be the case for others, too.”²⁰⁵ He also makes the point that:

Religion as a topic in the context of Jihadist violence makes most Western scholars extremely uncomfortable: not only do they not understand the Islamic faith well for the enumerated structural reasons, but also dwelling too much on religious ideology surely risks accusations of bigotry. The net result is that scholars tend to, without adequate justification; negate religious ideology as a causal mechanism. This is a tremendous mistake that, quite simply, means that scholars do not understand the very things that they are trying to explain. The subject of violence claiming its inspiration from religion should not be cheapened by an unwillingness to explore topics that may be difficult for Western researchers to broach.²⁰⁶

Having received proper training in Islamic theology and Islamic studies, the author of this dissertation claims more merit in explaining and arriving at the theological roots and justifications of Islamists and revisionists. A comparison between the scope and depth of this dissertation on the theological aspects and religious mechanisms of violence and revisions, and between any other available work on the revisions of the two organisations and other similar groups, clearly reflects the value and significance of theological training in studying and revealing the religious claims and mechanisms underpinning the process of violence and revisions. Lacking depth and theological insight, other studies offer no more than a general and superficial sociological, discursive or political reading of the theological contents of the process of revisions, with many of them containing theological mistakes or misunderstandings due to

²⁰⁵ Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 152; Love, *Beyond Sovereignty*, 175.

²⁰⁶ Gartenstein-Ross, “Significance of Religion,” 153.

the lack of a theological Islamic background, and thus sometimes lead to erroneous conclusions.²⁰⁷

Thus, ideology is crucial as it constitutes the centre of gravity and provides the key *raison d'être* from which groups' programmatic elements take their ideals/goals. Without a proper understanding of the ideology of extremists, counter-ideological efforts would be ineffective and correct alternative ideas could not be offered. A clear understanding of the ideology also helps to better distinguish each group's features and so minimise the danger of mistakenly attacking some ideas and groups and prevent unnecessary antagonising of others, which only complicates the problem.²⁰⁸ Therefore, Habeck emphasises that only by understanding the elaborate ideology of Jihadists "can the world determine how to contain and eventually end the threat they pose to stability and peace."²⁰⁹

Thus, as Turner rightly observes, the discourse in which the causal arguments on Jihadism have mainly been presented often detaches the issue from ideational factors. Explanations of Jihadist violence are usually conceptualised through the lens of exclusively contemporary issues and without due consideration to the importance of ideas. "This has the unfortunate effect of relegating religious ideology and historical political objectives to a position of limited importance. It is not only material forces that are of significance when observing Salafi Jihadism....ideas are equally of value and have a role to play."²¹⁰ Gartenstein-Ross also notes that religious ideas had been unfairly marginalised as a causal factor, something which he describes as "a bias against recognizing religion's relevance."²¹¹ Having highlighted the main trends in the literature on the importance of religious ideas, Gartenstein-Ross concludes that "religious ideas as a radicalizing factor or a factor shaping the outlook of violent groups can be more rigorously studied."²¹²

Cornelia Beyer explains how ideas are important and how they relate to material actions:

One may regard the material and the ideational as quite distinct; they are, however, closely related and partly independent.... For material change to occur ideas have to be expressed in creative or destructive action. Humans

²⁰⁷ Examples of works that have provided reading of some of the revisions' arguments are Lahoud, "Jihadi Recantations and Their Significance;" Kamolnick, "Al Qaeda's Sharia Crisis;" Jackson, "Beyond Jihad;" Gunaratna & Ali, "De-radicalization Initiatives in Egypt."

²⁰⁸ Bin Hassan, "Counterideological Work against Terrorist Ideology," 536.

²⁰⁹ Habeck, *Jihadist Ideology*, 5.

²¹⁰ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 36.

²¹¹ Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," ii.

²¹² Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," 59.

therefore act as creators of ideas and as mediators between ideas and the material. Regarded by realists as material facets (population) and in constructivism as bearers of ideas (agents) humans operate in both dimensions, able to transform the ideational into material and vice-versa.²¹³

Though the above accounts of ideology are analytically applicable to jihadist ideology, jihadist ideology differs from other conceptions of ideology, like the Marxist perception of ideology for example, as other perceptions view ideology as a secular, obscure reality that provides a singular account of the political world.²¹⁴ The difference lies in the fact that Jihadist ideology is not derived from secular concepts, but instead from notions of 'extra-rational agency' (religious symbols) that go beyond the material and are claimed to possess a 'cosmic origin'. It is further distinguished by the fact that Islam generally does not separate between the secular and religious spheres of life, and that both Islam and Jihadism share the same source of knowledge: the Quran and Sunna.²¹⁵ However, ideology and religion are analytically separable as religion seeks to increase the value of the individual through group participation, while ideology seeks to increase group benefit through individual participation.²¹⁶ Thus, jihadist ideology is distinct from Islam as well as from ordinary political ideologies.²¹⁷

However, in Islamism, religion and political ideology are interwoven; jihadist ideology contains elements of both religion and political ideology. Thus, in this case, political ideology becomes equivalent to religious beliefs.²¹⁸ Jihadists use religious words, symbols and values that distinctly political ideologies tend to avoid. Rivals are described by Jihadists in religious terms; the strategy and the goals are described through religious means; and acts of violence are justified through an interpretation of religious texts.²¹⁹ Though secular ideologies also motivate adherents, religious ideology provides a different type of motivation due to its promise that the devoted will receive an everlasting reward in the Hereafter.²²⁰ As religious radicals believe that they are

²¹³ Cornelia Beyer, "Hegemony Equilibrium and Counterpower: A Synthetic Approach," *International Studies* (23, no. 3 [2009]), 414.

²¹⁴ Freedden, *Ideology*, 9.

²¹⁵ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 38.

²¹⁶ Bruce Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 79.

²¹⁷ Assaf Moghadam, "The Salafi-Jihad as a Religious Ideology," *CTC Sentinel* (1, no. 3 [2008]), 15.

²¹⁸ Christopher Flood, "Myth and Ideology," in Kevin Schilbrack, ed., *Thinking through Myths: Philosophical Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2001), 189.

²¹⁹ Moghadam, "The Salafi-Jihad as a Religious Ideology," 15-16.

²²⁰ Gabriel Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 15.

fulfilling a Divine duty, they are more willing to put aside moral reservations about murder.²²¹ Their violence may not be instrumental but merely demonstrative,²²² and they are less likely to admit defeat because they believe that God will reward their steadfastness and suffering by eventually assuring their victory.²²³

As shown in the jihadi literature and explained in this study, religious ideology plays a crucial role in Jihadists' propaganda to attract followers and win sympathy from ordinary Muslims. They emphasise the point that they are striving for Islam in almost every page they write, and they quote verses from the Quran and the Sunna as well as opinions of classical Muslim scholars, giving the impression that their ideas are founded only and exclusively on Islam. The entire struggle is based on religious ideas that emphasise working for Islam and for the sake of Muslims as reflected in framing in concepts like sovereignty, jihad, caliphate, submission and allegiance to God alone and the supremacy of Islam. Salafi Jihadism can then be termed a 'religio-political ideology',²²⁴ 'religious ideology' or, as David Philpott calls it 'political theology'.²²⁵

Tarrow rightly notes that religion is a very reliable source of emotion and is therefore a recurring source of social movement framing. It provides ready-made symbols, rituals and solidarities that can be accessed and appropriated by leaders of these movements.²²⁶ Rashwan notes that intellectual and ideological foundations are particularly important for Islamist movements, "The decisive influence of intellectual foundations extends to all aspects of Islamist movements, from their names, the symbols and terms they adopt, their organisational structures, to their strategies and operational tactics. This distinguishes them from other social and political movements."²²⁷

Thus, without an ideology that persuasively appeals to the followers of Islamist movements, all external factors simply fail to engender, or keep alive, violent collective actions that the

²²¹ James Piazza, "Is Islamist Terrorism More Lethal? An Empirical Study of Group Ideology, Organization and Goal Structure," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (21, no. 1 [January 2009]), 66.

²²² Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2003), 220; Almond et al, *Strong Religion*, 235.

²²³ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 165; Almond, *Strong Religion*, 96; Rabasa, *Dearadicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 28-9.

²²⁴ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 38.

²²⁵ Daniel Philpott, "The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations," *World Politics* (55 no. 1 [2002]), 92.

²²⁶ Sydney Tarrow, *Power in Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 112,

²²⁷ Daa Rashwan, "The Renunciation of Violence by Egyptian Jihadi Organizations," in Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 116.

perpetrators would normally consider to be immoral or unlawful. More specifically, ideology serves two roles: it helps Islamists justify acts of violence, and it helps them to morally disengage themselves from their act and from the victim.²²⁸

Also, in his study about counter-ideological work against terrorist ideologies, M Bin Hassan asserts that the political influence of al-Qaeda and similar groups is less about the individual's actions and more about the dominance of the ideology.²²⁹ In his analysis of Qutb's discourse, Ahmed Moussali rightly notes, "The rise of fundamentalism is, in most cases, attributed to social, psychological and/or economic causes, and there have been few attempts to understand fundamentalism on its own terms...To study the Middle East correctly and intelligibly, religion should be viewed as one of the major causes of change."²³⁰

In addition, Philpott warns that the religious ideology, or what he terms 'political theology', is a notion that international relations theorists are often unwilling to account for. Therefore, "If International Relations scholars are to understand the violence of September 11, then they must come to understand how religious movements like radical Islamic revivalism, acting on their political theology, challenge the Westphalian synthesis, the fundamental authority structure of the international order."²³¹

The same applies to moderation or de-radicalisation; causal factors are insufficient without ideological support. Tezcur notes that the integration of an extremist group into the political system, for example, "will not result in moderation unless party leaders have enough intellectual resources to reorient their ideological worldviews. In this sense, ideological evolution remains a precondition for behavioural change."²³² Browsers also rightly notes that moderation requires intellectuals who are free to interact and develop alternative frameworks for politics and society.²³³ In a study about de-radicalisation dialogues with Islamist militants in Yemeni jails, Ane Birk notes that because these dialogues were based on Islam and Islamic law as the

²²⁸ Moghadam, *Globalization of Martyrdom*, 255.

²²⁹ Bin Hassan, "CounterIdeological Work against Terrorist Ideology," 533.

²³⁰ See Moussalli, *Discourse of Sayyid Qutb*, 11. Also quoted in Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 1.

²³¹ Philpott, "The Challenge of September 11," 92.

²³² Tezcur, "Moderation Theory Revisited," 11.

²³³ Michaelle Browsers, *Political Ideology in the Arab World: Accommodation and Transformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 179.

ultimate source of truth and legitimacy, they are more compelling than other approaches and are therefore more effective in moderating the prisoner's beliefs.²³⁴

Authors of 'Decline and Disengagement' emphasise that ideology plays a more significant role in motivating Islamist radicals than other factors; because Islamists are so ideologically motivated, they may be less susceptible to structural rewards and punishments.²³⁵ Rabasa et al also emphasise that religious doctrine distinguishes militant Islamists from other extremists, and that the effects of this have not been explored. "Because they are motivated by faith, Islamist radicals are more committed than nonreligious extremists and therefore are less likely to de-radicalise. Nevertheless, precisely because Islamist ideology plays such a central role in these groups, it is necessary to change militant Islamists' beliefs as well as their behaviour. Moreover, while it may be difficult to alter the worldview of Islamist radicals, there is an opportunity to use mainstream Islamic theology to undermine radical Islamist ideology."²³⁶

The argument that ideology is of paramount importance gained greater credit in the recent literature as there is "an emergent consensus among counterterrorism analysts and practitioners that to defeat the threat posed by Islamist extremism and terrorism, there is a need to go beyond security and intelligence measures, taking proactive measures to prevent vulnerable individuals from radicalising and rehabilitating those who have already embraced extremism. This broader conception of counterterrorism is manifested in the counter and de-radicalization programs...."²³⁷ As most of these programs primarily target and counter the ideology or religious justifications of violence,²³⁸ this stands as an undisputable recognition of the role ideology plays in Islamists' violence and de-radicalisation.

On the individual level, the authors of *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* rightly argue that quitting an ideologically based radical Islamist group is different from leaving a criminal group or a gang, as the latter is an essentially non-ideological entity. "Leaving an Islamist group implies the rejection of a radical ideology or of essential parts of that ideology.... the articulation of

²³⁴ Ane Skov Birk, *Incredible Dialogues: Religious Dialogue as a Means of Counter-Terrorism in Yemen* (London: King's College International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2009), 1.

²³⁵ Demant, "Decline and Disengagement," 129.

²³⁶ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 27.

²³⁷ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xiii.

²³⁸ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xv-xvi& 29.

theologically grounded imperatives for renouncing violence by credible authorities is an important factor in catalysing the decision to leave the group.”²³⁹

In addition, “[I]f a radical ideology is left unchallenged, it is more likely to continue attracting recruits. Even if an organization espousing the ideology fades away, another group is likely to adopt this world view and continue the struggle. Therefore, to truly extinguish the threat from a radical philosophy, it may be necessary for members to renounce their beliefs and explain why they are erroneous. In other words, a wholesale rejection of this worldview may be required.”²⁴⁰

Thereupon, violence ultimately depends upon the appeal of an ideology that excuses or even glorifies violent acts. However, this does not mean that ideology is the sole reason for violence; rather it means that it is a significant reason without which all other contextual reasons fall short to engender or justify any violent act, as without ideological legitimisation, acts of violence would be considered immoral or illegitimate by the perpetrators and thus religiously unjustifiable. As Islamists’ ideology almost always takes a religious form, the ideology and theology of these movements need more attention and a more detailed study. However, this should be done only after investigating the broader socioeconomic and political contexts in which a specific ideology was born and survived or died.

However, while other causal justifications of violence warrant some merit and do play a role, without understanding the ideology, such explanations are, however, limited as they are caught in temporal, individual and geographical contexts that limit their ability to address the issue as a whole.²⁴¹ The above clearly motivates and supports the objective of this dissertation: to focus on the religious ideology after delineating the broader structural context within which the ideology was framed. Thus, this dissertation concedes that the causes of violence and non-violence are complex and need to be located in the interplay of personal motivations, strategic and tactical objectives of the violent groups, and also in the larger structural factors affecting the society in general and these groups in particular.

As argued by Paul Wilkinson in his study on terrorism, explanations of ‘terrorism’ should concentrate on the social context of the terrorists’ ideologies and beliefs. The best way for understanding ‘terrorism’ is to explore the individual political motivations of terrorists, and to relate them to particular ideologies and beliefs. Wilkinson, meanwhile, emphasises that “it is

²³⁹ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, xv.

²⁴⁰ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 10-11.

²⁴¹ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 4.

essential to take account of the unique political, historical, and cultural context, and the ideology and aims of the groups involved.”²⁴²

Moreover, in his study about ‘Terrorism in the Name of Religion’, Magnus Ranstorp maintains that although some ‘terrorists’ have religious motivations, they are also driven by “day-to-day practical political considerations within their context-specific environment.” Yet, Ranstorp asserts that Islamist groups are difficult to analyse because religion and politics cannot be separated in Islam and that Islamist groups include their short and long-term objectives within an encapsulating framework of religion. Within this framework, their agenda may also “contain a nationalist-separatist agenda in which the religious component is often entangled with a complex mixture of cultural, political, and linguistic factors.”²⁴³

Therefore, exploring the important factor of religious ideology in detail is what distinguishes this study from other studies which focus on external causal factors, paying only little attention to ideology. Thus, this dissertation not only considers ideology as one of the causal factors but also the most important factor. However, it considers it as an internal causal factor rather than an external one. Therefore, other causal factors are described as ‘external causal factors’ or ‘contextual factors’ while ideology is described as an ‘internal causal’ or ‘textual’ factor, for other external factors, such as repression, socioeconomic and political conditions, are used as contextual justifications and support for Islamic movements’ internal understanding and interpretation of some Islamic Sharia texts. Therefore, the ideology of Islamic movements often takes a religious form supported by existing structural injustices, and this is the case for the two groups under investigation in this study (IG and al-Jihād).

This clarifies the relationship between religion, ideology, causal factors and violence. Ideology is the set of beliefs of any organisation, and in the case of the two groups under discussion it takes a religious form which uses other external causal factors as justifications and support for its internally-built religious ideology, which together lead to physical acts of violence. Mary Habeck rightly notes that the pronouncements and acts of violence of al-Qaeda- related figures are not just reactions to the US policies but rather “a reflection of their own most deeply held religio-

²⁴² Paul Wilkinson, “Terrorism: An International Research Agenda,” in Paul Wilkinson & Alasdair M Stewart, *Contemporary Research on Terrorism* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), ix.

²⁴³ Magnus Ranstorp, “Terrorism in the Name of Religion,” *Journal of International Affairs* (50, no.1 [Summer 1996]), 42.

political views of the world.”²⁴⁴ Therefore, the current study focuses on ideology as opposed to external causal factors for, as shown in the above literature review and discussion, existing literature focuses on external factors and pays only minimal attention to ideology despite its crucial significance.

Though Islam is recognised as a factor in several sources on international politics, these sources, in general, view Islam and religion as a factor to be understood in the context of existing International Relations theories, and not as an approach on its own.²⁴⁵ Even when literature speaks about ideology, it often classifies it as part of the causation without explaining the details of this ideology or how it is employed in theological terms to arrive at specific conclusions. Therefore, this dissertation tries to fill this gap by focusing on how Islamic texts (whose Salafi Jihadist interpretations form the ideology of these two groups) are used, in theological terms, to justify or retract violence. Therefore, it is worth emphasising again that the main contribution of this study is not concerned with why the two groups have committed or retracted violence, though insightful answers of this are provided. It is concerned with how they theologically argue for or against violence using religious arguments in both cases, which makes it a dissertation in the field of Islamic studies, and not in any other field.

Case Selection

The Egyptian cases are selected because the Egyptian Jihadists are the nucleus of the jihadi movements worldwide and the co-founders of the international jihadi movement. As will be shown later, the writings of the Egyptian jihadi ideologues are the most effective and most quoted among Jihadi movements worldwide. The Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, for example, is known to have been the godfather of the Jihadi thought worldwide; and the writings of Faḍl are considered the major manifestos of al-Qaeda and similar militant Islamist movements. More importantly, though there are several cases of Islamists’ revisions worldwide,²⁴⁶ the Egyptian cases are the most comprehensive ones and are the cases which have prolifically produced anti-violence literature that can be effectively evaluated and analysed. Other cases of transformation are partial and lack ideological justifications in a written form, and thus their discourse or

²⁴⁴ Habeck, *Jihadist Ideology*, 162.

²⁴⁵ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 6.

²⁴⁶ Examples of this include some Islamist movements and members in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Singapore, Tajikistan, and Mauritania.

ideology would be extremely difficult to analyse. Thus, "Egypt's militant groups are the most important ones due to their early rise to notoriety, influence upon global jihadi ideology, contribution to Afghan mujahideens, and inspiration for al-Qaida."²⁴⁷

Specificity versus Generalisation

In his discussion and literature review of radicalisation and de-radicalisation, Alex Schmid rightly notes that factors which can lead to radicalisation, de-radicalisation and disengagement are very large. Yet, "[I]n the literature most findings are derived from small samples and few case studies, making comparison and generalisations problematic, and findings provisional."²⁴⁸ Thus, the main issue with all studies seeking a general hypothesis is that they cannot accurately combine and theorise about the excessive diversity of the Islamic world and the varied contextual circumstances that give rise to Islamist movements or cause their transformation within this multicultural diversity. As circumstances and motivations of movements differ from one another, every case or country should be analysed individually to accurately analyse the stances of a specific Islamist group. The current study will show how the strategies and ideologies of the two groups analysed in this dissertation are different, despite some commonalities, both in their justifications of violence and transformation, though they have undergone the same cultural strains and the same political process in the same country.

Lia Brynjar and Skjølberg Katja argue:

There is a multitude of situations capable of provoking terrorism. We find terrorists among deprived and uneducated people, and among the affluent and well educated; we find terrorists among psychotic and 'normal' healthy people; and among people of both sexes and of all ages. Terrorism occurs in rich as well as in poor countries; in the modern

²⁴⁷ Khaled Al-Hashimi and Carolin Goerzig, "Baseless Jihad," in Heitmeyer, Wilhelm et al, eds., *Control of Violence: Historical and International Perspectives on Violence in Modern Societies* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2010), 481.

²⁴⁸ Alex P. Schmid, "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism—The Hague: ICCT* (March 2013) Available: http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/31064974/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ56TQJRTWSMTNPEA&Expires=1450700408&Signature=9HinwvqCQpnwCYJMjwa%2FmRtQ%2Bc0%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DAlex_P_Schmid_Radicalisation_De-Radica.pdf (Accessed 21 December 2015), 1V.

industrialized world and in less developed areas; during a process of transition and development, prior to or after such a process; in former colonial states and in independent ones; and, in established democracies as well as in less democratic regimes. This list could easily be extended, but it suffices as a demonstration of the wide diversity of conditions we need to consider when trying to develop an understanding of terrorism. Obviously, this diversity makes it difficult to generalize about terrorism, and the dynamic nature of most of these conditions makes it hard to predict anything about future terrorism.²⁴⁹

Jack Goldstone also criticises generalisation, arguing that factors associated with violence have different effects in different societies. So, wide cross-societal generalisations are of relatively little use, and therefore it is better to closely examine the interaction of forces in a particular setting rather than make sweeping generalisations.²⁵⁰

Therefore, though some conclusions are generalisable, it is necessary to avoid unwarranted generalisations in making assessments, analysis, and conclusions. Giovanni Caracci notes that the cultural matrix of terrorism differs from case to case. Yet, researchers find it “easy to over-generalise and engage in reductionism.” He then quotes Walter Reich’s statement that researchers should take special care to identify the groups they are studying and limit their explanations to only these particular groups, defining the circumstances under which those explanations are valid, and not claim that their studies are valid for other than these particular groups.²⁵¹ Because of that, many scholars of Islamism prefer to explain this phenomenon by way of country or organisational case studies. That is why this dissertation will explore specific groups rather than attempt to generalise. Yet, the common features and generalisable points that apply beyond the cases of this study will be highlighted.

²⁴⁹ B Lia, and K. H. Skjølberg, *Why Terrorism Occurs: A Survey of Theories and Hypotheses on the Causes of Terrorism* (Kjeller: Forsvarets Forsknings institutt (FFI), Report 2000/02769), 8.

²⁵⁰ Jack Goldstone, “An Analytical Framework,” in Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr, Forokh Moshiri, eds., *Revolutions of the Late Twentieth Century* (Boulder, Colo: West view Press, 1991), 42.

²⁵¹ Giovanni Caracci, “Cultural and Contextual Aspects of Terrorism,” *Psychology of Terrorism* (3 [2002]), 58.

Approach, Methodology, Objectives and Conclusion

Motivated by the arguments above, this dissertation focuses on the theological and ideological dimensions that show how religious thoughts that form the ideology of Islamists are extremely important as they can challenge, just as they can be influenced by, socioeconomic and political considerations. Unless the ideology that gives rise to violence changes, the root cause of violence will remain in force because ideology is the fuel of collective actions of violence. Walid Phares rightly notes that post-9/11 attempts to understand Islamists' violence "still link the rise of Jihadism to poverty and global attitudes instead of seeing it as a result of mass mobilisation by jihadist ideologues and movements. Jihadists are mobilising radicalised Muslims not on the grounds of America's image, but to follow the injunction of Allah."²⁵²

M. Bin Hassan also emphasises that "[T]here are various approaches in responding to the ideas of the terrorists but any meaningful approach should take into account the theological nature of terrorists' ideas, couched in juristic and jurisprudential pronouncements.... This is an important point to bear in mind in any effort to make the ideological response succeed and be widely accepted. This underscores the importance of the theological and juristic approach in the ideological war against terrorism."²⁵³ Therefore, this study joins other studies in emphasising that "[I]deology plays a crucial role in the member's decision to join Islamist groups, and that perceived failure of the ideology often plays a central role in members' decisions to exit militant Islamist groups."²⁵⁴

In addition, rather than attempting to make excessive generalisations, the dissertation focuses on specific cases within a particular country. Even inside one country like Egypt, where the structural and psychological as well as the political process circumstances are common to all, there are sharp disagreements and differences between various Islamist groups. Such differences are ideology-based, not circumstantial or structural. This is one of the main reasons why ideology will be the focus of this study. However, to fully explain the motivation of the groups under investigation, their acts need to be positioned in their cultural and contextual milieu, and therefore the broader contextual economic and socio-political factors will be

²⁵² Phares, *The War of Ideas*, 248.

²⁵³ Bin Hassan, "Counterideological Work against Terrorist Ideology," 537. Refer to the whole article for more information on the importance of ideology and theology in studying Islamists' violence and countering it.

²⁵⁴ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 27-8; Demant, "Decline and Disengagement," 129; Michael Jacobson, *Terrorist Dropouts: Learning from those who have Left* (Washington: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2010), 8.

explained, and other ideological and thematic commonalities among various Islamist movements will be outlined.

As this study will briefly highlight the context and external causes of violence and transformation in chapter 2, a mixture of the above-mentioned relevant approaches will be utilised in that chapter, namely the structural-psychological approaches and the political process approach. The main purpose of this is to set the scene and contextualise the ideas that together form the ideology. However, to analyse the focus of the dissertation, which is the two groups' theological textual arguments, textual analysis will be the main player.

Textual analysis is a method for analysing data that closely examines either the content and meaning of texts or their structure and discourse.²⁵⁵ It comprises a variety of primarily qualitative methodologies that focus on the analysis of textual content. Methodologies and approaches that fall under textual analysis include hermeneutics, content analysis, semiotics, phenomenology, rhetorical analysis, interaction analysis, and performance studies.²⁵⁶

As textual analysis is a flexible approach that is centred around a systemic way of reading and interpreting texts, researchers can use a number of theoretical frameworks when interpreting a text. The framework adopted depends on the researcher's preferences. Some researchers explore texts, their meanings and conventions, and their relationship to the context, whereas others assess the construction and reinforcement of 'cultural myths'.²⁵⁷ As this research focuses on texts' meanings, content, hermeneutics and relationship to context and realism, it will employ a mixture of the above methodologies, more particularly hermeneutics and content analysis, and tailor them to suit the nature of the text being investigated. Another merit of using this mixed method approach is that it gives the opportunity to compensate for the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of another, for each single methodology has its own nuances, strengths, and weaknesses.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ Sharon Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," in Lisa M. Given, ed., *The Sage Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2008), 865. In this dissertation, the focus is on the content and meaning.

²⁵⁶ For a detailed overview of these different approaches and their sub-categories within textual analysis, see the chapter titled "Textual Analysis," in L. Frey, C Botan & G Kreps, *Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1999), chapter 9.

²⁵⁷ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 865.

²⁵⁸ An example of an academic research that used a mixture of textual analysis methodologies is the research conducted by the Glasgow University Group, wherein a combination of textual analysis methodologies, including

Because textual analysis refers to a variety of research methods that emphasise meaning and bring structure to large amounts of unstructured information embodied in written language, it has been defined in different ways. However, all definitions emphasise its flexibility and primary usage as a means of reading and interpreting texts. For example, Johnny Holloway defines it as “a research technique designed to make systematic and replicable inferences from texts.”²⁵⁹ John Scott defines it as “a method of analysing the contents of documents that uses qualitative procedures for assessing the significance of particular ideas or meanings in the document.”²⁶⁰ Scott adds that textual analysis is rooted in the hermeneutic tradition of textual interpretation, and that the “interpretation of a text must always be undertaken from the reader's particular standpoint. The inference of meaning is possible only by relating the text to some other frame of reference and entering into a dialogue with the text. We must comprehend a text by understanding the frame of reference from which it was produced, and the researcher's own frame of reference becomes the springboard from which this becomes possible.”²⁶¹ This is what this study aims to do, and Scott’s emphasis on this supports my previous argument that analysing the text from the frame of reference it claims to represent, Islamic theology, is essential, and that having a solid Islamic theological background is crucial for a sound reading of the text.

McKee explains textual analysis as a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world:

It is a methodology— a data-gathering process— for those researchers who want to understand the ways in which members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are, and of how they fit into the world in which they live... When we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text. We interpret texts ... in order to try and obtain

content analysis and semiotic analysis, was used to explore the ideology at work in the presentation of television news surrounding industrial reporting. Their textual analyses identified systematic biases against the working classes. See Glasgow Media Group, *Bad News* (London: Routledge, 1976); Glasgow Media Group, *More Bad News* (London: Routledge, 1980).

²⁵⁹ Johnny Holloway, "Text Analysis," in Neil J. Salkind & Kristin Rasmussen, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Measurement and Statistics*, (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2007), 1000.

²⁶⁰ John Scott, "Textual Analysis," in Victor Jupp ed., *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods* (London, SAGE Publications, 2006), 298.

²⁶¹ Scott, "Textual Analysis," 298.

a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them.²⁶²

So, to textually analyse a text means to break it down into its component parts, and then examine and offer an interpretation of the component parts as well as of the whole. By means of interpretation we are able to go beyond the obvious meaning of the text and to read the implied meaning or sub-text.²⁶³ This is what this study does: it divides the main themes in the texts of the two groups into different categories, examines them one by one, and offers an interpretation of each category as well as of the whole to arrive at its conclusions.

Textual analysis is selected as the primary method of analysis in this dissertation because it fruitfully increases our understanding of the construction of textual meanings in texts. As will be seen from this study, textual analysis provides, through close and detailed scrutiny of texts, a rich discussion of presentational and structural specifics and subtleties that would remain unidentified if a cursory analysis was conducted. Textual analysis also benefits from the fact that its data source (texts) exists before the researcher decides to analyse them, which saves meaning constructions and the ideological implications of texts from the biases that accompany the situation when the data sources are created for, or around, the research project. Also, as texts are readily available, this can quicken the research process and minimise ethical difficulties surrounding access to data.²⁶⁴

McKee notes that "[T]exts are the material traces that are left of the practice of sensemaking—the only empirical evidence we have of how other people make sense of the world."²⁶⁵ John Hartley uses the metaphor of forensic science to show the importance of textual analysis and how it helps make sense of the practices/actions of others.²⁶⁶ As Hartley says, forensic science

²⁶² See Alan McKee, *Textual Analysis: A Beginner's Guide* (SAGE Publications Ltd., London, 2003), 1. Example of works that used textual analysis in Islamic studies include: Uri Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of Muhammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims: A Textual Analysis* (Princeton, N.J.: The Darwin Press, 1995); Fikret Karcic, "Textual Analysis in Islamic Studies: A Short Historical and Comparative Survey," *Islamic Studies* (45, no. 2 [summer 2006]), 191-220; Najam Haider, "The Community Divided: A Textual Analysis of the Murders of Idrīs b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 175/791)," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (128, no. 3 [2008]), 459-475.

²⁶³ Karcic, "Textual Analysis in Islamic Studies," 192.

²⁶⁴ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 866.

²⁶⁵ McKee, *Textual Analysis*, 15.

²⁶⁶ Hartley argues that forensic scientists never actually see a crime committed. By the time they arrive on the scene, it has gone forever. They can never wind back time and witness it themselves; and they can never be entirely certain about what happened. What they can do is sift through the evidence that is left, the forensic evidence, and make an educated and trained guess about what happened, based on that evidence. The fact that, unlike physics, this science

relies on 'clues'. This is also how textual analysis works. We can never know for certain how people interpret a particular text but we can look at the clues, gather evidence about similar sensemaking practices, and make educated guesses.²⁶⁷

In this sense, textual analysis does not attempt to provide a conclusively single 'correct' interpretation of a text, but is rather used to identify which interpretations are more possible and more likely, for texts have multiple and varied meanings. However, such 'semantic instability' does not mean that researchers can force a text to mean whatever they wish it to mean. They are restricted by the fact that interpretation of the meaning is derived from the genre of the text, its codes and conventions, and also its ideological, cultural, socio-political and historical context—which work together to convey a preferred reading of the text.²⁶⁸

This should largely address the concerns of the critics of textual analysis who question its validity and objectivity, claiming that reading of a text echoes the perspective of the researcher and that the specific approaches used to analyse texts are as ideological as the texts themselves.²⁶⁹ These concerns are also addressed in this dissertation by the fact that the text is interpreted in conjunction with its socio-political context, and evidence that supports the interpretation is provided. The socio-political dimensions of interpretations of texts enable researchers to further benefit from the different textual analysis approaches and allow multi-perspectival textual analysis, which reduces risks of subjectivity and the enforcement of an ideologised reading of the text.²⁷⁰ Combining the text and the context also saves this research from one of the oft-repeated critiques of textual analysis: that it is conducted in isolation—i.e. the text is all that matters, and it is the central, or the only, focus of analysis.²⁷¹ Combining textual analysis with contextual and framing analysis prevents this risk of textualising the world and acknowledges the world that exists outside of texts.²⁷²

is not repeatable— they can't murder people themselves to see if it turns out exactly the same— does not stop scientists from using their training and expertise to attempt to build up a picture of what happened. This can stand as a metaphor for what happens when we perform textual analysis: we can never see, or recover, the actual practice of sense-making. All that we have is the evidence that is left behind of that practice: the text. Therefore, the material reality of texts allows for the recovery and critical interrogation of discursive politics in an 'empirical' form as texts serve as forensic evidence. See John Hartley, *The Creation of the Public in The Age of Popular Media* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 29; McKee, *Textual Analysis*, 15.

²⁶⁷ McKee, *Textual Analysis*, 15.

²⁶⁸ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 865-6.

²⁶⁹ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 866.

²⁷⁰ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 867.

²⁷¹ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 867.

²⁷² Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 867.

Therefore, before answering the main research questions, this dissertation will answer another significant question: What are the external causal reasons (contextual factors) of violence and revisions? This question will be answered in chapter two by examining the context and providing a brief socioeconomic and political background of the history of the two groups under discussion, and shedding light on the external causal factors that led them to their decisions of violence and non-violence. Therefore, the employment of the above-mentioned structural and political process approaches is required in this particular chapter (chapter 2).

After chapter 2, the remaining four chapters will answer the main research questions, which will categorise and analyse the main themes in the texts of revisionists and offer a contextualised textual reading of their interpretations. To do so, the dissertation seeks to answer the following two main questions: 1- What were the theological and ideological attitudes of the revisionists both before and after revision, and how could they affect their stances concerning violence? 2- How could the revisionists reverse from violence to non-violence based on Islamic theological reasoning in both cases?

To textually analyse the literature and answer these two broad questions, the research will categorise the main themes in the texts and examine the interconnections of meanings both inside and outside the text by linking the specific text or theme to the broader text and the outside context. Thus, after explaining the context in chapter two, the textual analysis in later chapters will cover the 'rhetorical context' of the text. The textual analysis will unobtrusively answer such sub-questions as: Who created the text? What topic or issue is being addressed? What are the authors' intended messages? Who is the intended audience? What are the specific textual characteristics? How is the audience addressed? What is the central theme or claim made? Is there evidence or an explanation from reality to support or defend the theme or claim? What is the nature of this evidence or explanation, if any?²⁷³ Together, this will shed light on the wider context of the text, i.e., how the text relates to the context as well as to other texts in the same genre or format.

The first main research question is answered by providing overviews and a textual analysis of the arguments of the two groups both before and after revisions. The violent ideology of al-Jihād Organisation is discussed in chapter three and the revisions are discussed in chapter four.

²⁷³ Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," 866.

The IG pro-violence ideology is discussed in chapter five and their revisions in chapter six. The second main question of how they could change from violence to non-violence using Islamic theological reasoning in both cases is answered in the analysis provided at the end of chapter four and six, and also in the final conclusion.

This will be the main contribution of this study, and it aims at understanding the dynamics of change in the revisionists' theological and ideological attitudes regarding the following concepts or themes: *jihād*, *dār al-Islām wa dār al-ḥarb* (abode of Islam and abode of War), *ḥākimiyya* (God's sovereignty), *al-walā' wa al-barā'* (allegiance to the believers and dissociation from the disbelievers), *takfīr* (considering other Muslims as disbelievers), *ḥisba* (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil), *jizya* (taxes to be levied by Islamic states on the Christian or Jewish residents living under their protection), *amān* (covenant of security given by Muslims to a non-Muslim or vice versa) and *tatarrus* (using Muslim prisoners as human shields in war). These are the main Jihadi concepts and themes that together constitute the ideology of Jihadists.²⁷⁴

These concepts constitute the 'frames' of collective action for these movements. Due to some limitations of textual analysis,²⁷⁵ and because Islamist movements are, after all, 'social movements' that employ a massive cultural 'toolkit' of ideas, beliefs, and narratives to target multiple audiences in order to gain support for its political objectives,²⁷⁶ the notion of 'framing' or the 'ideological framework' component of the political process approach/social movement theories will also be used as a theoretical tool, together with textual analysis, to help explain these concepts.²⁷⁷ Wiktorowicz notes that though the majority of studies on Islamic movements assume that a particular set of grievances, translated into religious symbols and idioms, triggers

²⁷⁴ These concepts were arrived at by coding and surveying the main concepts used to justify violence in the two groups' texts.

²⁷⁵ Textual analysis helps us determine the authenticity, meaning and motifs of texts; development of ideas; patterns; and so on. However, other questions important for the study of a text such as the personality of the author, scene, audience, contextual purpose of writing, are to be addressed by historical research and relevant methods of social sciences. One of the limitations of textual analysis is that it is adequate only for the study of 'normative religion', namely systems of beliefs and norms of behaviour. The study of 'living religion' or of the way how groups and individuals translate their 'normative religion' into practice is beyond the scope of textual analysis. Also, the social and cultural role of the text is beyond the scope of textual analysis. See Karcic, "Textual Analysis," 218.

²⁷⁶ Michael Page, Lara Challita & Alistair Harris, "Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula: Framing Narratives and Prescriptions," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (23: no. 2, [2011]), 153.

²⁷⁷ Framing can refer to how media and others frame a specific group or action as well as how groups frame their own ideas and collective action. Examples of writings on the latter include: Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*; Rogan, "A Frame Analysis of Jihadist Ideology;" Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SM;" Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements;" Page et al, "Framing Narratives;" Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad: Intramovement Framing Contests and Al-Qaeda's Struggle for Sacred Authority," *International Review of Social History* (49, no. 12 [2004]), 159-77.

mobilisation, different generations of social movement theories and accompanying debates have proven that other factors, such as frame resonance, resource availability and shifts in opportunity structures, are inseparably linked to the mobilisation.²⁷⁸

Thus, although this study is not trying to follow the same course as social, political or other sciences that make use of framing, the study will utilise the relevant theoretical aspects of framing to help explain the ideological framework of Islamists. The concept of framing is not only widely used in social sciences but also in other disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, discourse analysis, communication and media studies, political science, and policy studies. Therefore, there is a wide range of scholarship on collective action frames and framing processes in relation to social movements to the extent that framing processes have come to be regarded as a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of such movements.²⁷⁹

As violence is usually legitimised through ideological 'frames' that are, or try to be, resonant with the public, 'frames' refer to the struggle of social movements with the construction of mobilising and counter mobilising meanings and ideas. In this sense, social movements are not seen as mere carriers of existing meanings and ideas that result automatically from unanticipated events, structural arrangements, or already extant ideologies. Instead, movement actors are viewed as signifying agents actively engaged in the construction and maintenance of meanings for constituents, bystanders, observers or rivals.²⁸⁰ So, 'framing' is a form of meaning construction which refers to "an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction.... the resultant products of this framing activity are referred to as 'collective action frames'."²⁸¹ The term 'frame' is used throughout the literature on the topic both as a noun and as a verb that means to construct a frame or argue a case or a meaning in a particular way.²⁸²

²⁷⁸ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 4.

²⁷⁹ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 15; Robert Benford and David Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* (26 [2000]), 611-12.

²⁸⁰ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 123-4; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 612.

²⁸¹ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 614. The framing process is active in the sense that something is being done, and processual in the sense of being a dynamic, evolving process. It entails agency in the sense that what is evolving is the work of social movement organisations or movement activists. And it is contentious in the sense that it involves the generation of interpretive frames that not only differ from existing ones but that may also challenge them.

²⁸² David Snow and Scott Byrd, "Ideology, Framing Processes, and Islamic Terrorist Movements," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* (12, no. 2 [2007]), 124. Examples of works that use the term as both a verb and a noun include: Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes;" Ismail, "Islamist Movements;" Roel

The utility of collective action frames is manifest in their ability to sort and categorise how organisations employ different ideas, beliefs, narratives, and traditions to mobilise adherents.²⁸³ Frames constitute interpretative schemata that offer cognitive tools and a language to make sense of events and experiences as social movements need to produce and disseminate interpretations required to mobilise adherents and garner support.²⁸⁴ As linguistic devices, frames are the mechanisms by which individuals or groups communicate their conceptualisations about themselves, other parties and the conflict.²⁸⁵

Frames help render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organise experience and guide action. Frames serve an interpretive function by focusing, articulating, and extending meanings to activate adherents, transforming bystanders into supporters, and exacting concessions. Frames perform this interpretive function by simplifying and condensing aspects of the 'outside world', but in ways that are meant to mobilise constituents and potential adherents, to garner bystander support, and demobilise opponents.²⁸⁶ Therefore, framing is a very useful tool in understanding how a group has managed to transmit messages to their audiences.²⁸⁷

Thus, collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organisation. With the IG and al-Jihad, this refers to the above concepts of jihad, *hākimiyya*, *hisba* etc. The framing notion helps this dissertation explain the ways in which meanings are produced, articulated and disseminated by movement actors through interactive processes. It shows how adherents are convinced to participate in a movement and how individual participants conceptualise themselves as a collectivity.²⁸⁸ The use of framing by Islamist groups reflects the ideational and cultural elements of contentious politics. Though frames alone do not explain every dimension of collective action, they constitute significant interpretive tools that translate grievances and perceived opportunities into the mobilisation of resources and movement activism. Therefore, framing

Meijer, "'Defending our Honor': Authenticity and the Framing of Resistance in the Iraqi Sunni Town of Falluja," *Etnofoor* (17, no. 1/2[2004]), 23-43.

²⁸³ Page et al, "Framing Narratives," 154.

²⁸⁴ Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory: A New Direction for Research," *Mediterranean Politics* (7, no. 3 [2002]), 202; Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 15.

²⁸⁵ Rogan, "A Frame Analysis of Jihadist Ideology," 395.

²⁸⁶ David Snow and Rbert Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Research* (No. 1, [1988]), 198; Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 124.

²⁸⁷ Emmanuel Karagiannis, "Hizballah as a Social Movement Organization: A Framing Approach," *Mediterranean Politics* (14, no. 3 [2009]), 379-80.

²⁸⁸ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 15.

provides a useful tool for examining the interaction of ideas and mobilisation,²⁸⁹ which is essential for achieving the objectives of this dissertation. As Rowland and Theye argue, “If terrorism is fundamentally rhetorical, understanding the nature of that message and why some find it so appealing that they are willing to sacrifice for it is essential.”²⁹⁰

Furthermore, using the dynamic ‘frame analysis’ that connects thought to action and shows how conclusions are arrived at in light of events and pre-existing ideological beliefs helps overcome the basic problem with the conventional use of ideology as a kind of explanatory variable. Such a problem, identified by Snow and Byrd, lies in that the conventional treatment of ideology tends to consider it as though it is reified and a given fact, rather than as a topic for analysis, and thus glosses over the discursive ideological work whose understanding is required to articulate and elaborate the array of possible links between ideas, events, and action.²⁹¹ In addition, exploring jihadist ideology through frame analysis fills in a gap in the existing literature. In his ‘Frame Analysis of Jihadist Ideology’, Randall Rogan notes that after 9/11 attacks researchers focused on exploring the mechanisms by which Bush’s speeches and Western media frame radical Islam, yet there is a paucity of scholarly research investigating the writings, pronouncements, or communiques of Jihadists themselves. He also notes that there exist only scant communication-based analyses of radical Islamic discourse, though such analyses are critical. Therefore, frame analysis is important as it provides a methodology for gaining an insight into the communicative devices by which jihadist leaders articulate their jurisprudence for the consequent acts of violence.²⁹²

It is worth clarifying that though ideology and frames are usually used interchangeably,²⁹³ they are not one and the same. Ideology is a broad and relatively durable set of beliefs that affect one’s orientation not only towards politics but towards life in general. It has a long staying power. On the other hand, frames serve as innovative amplifications and extensions of, or antidotes to, extant ideologies or components of them. Therefore, ideology serves as both a resource and constraint in relation to framing processes and collective action frames.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁹ Wiktorowicz, “Islamic Activism and SMT,” 205-6.

²⁹⁰ R C Rowland & K. Theye, “The Symbolic DNA of Terrorism,” *Communication Monographs* (75, no. 1 [2008]), 53.

²⁹¹ Snow and Byrd, “Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements,” 133.

²⁹² Rogan, “A Frame Analysis of Jihadist Ideology,” 393-5.

²⁹³ Fahmy, “Muslim Democrats,” 23.

²⁹⁴ Wiktorowicz, “Islamic Activism and SMT,” 208; Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 613, footnote 2.

Collective action frames have two characteristic features: the first refers to the interactive, discursive processes that attend to the core framing tasks and thus are generative of collective action frames, while the second refers to their action-oriented function.²⁹⁵ The above concepts of jihad, *hisba*, etc., constitute the first feature and are constructed partly because movement followers share a common understanding of some problematic condition or situation they define as being in need of change (the non-implementation of the Sharia and the widespread corruption and injustice), make attributions regarding who or what is to blame (local governments and others listed below), articulate an alternative set of arrangements (rebellion against the ruler and re-Islamisation of the society through *hisba*, etc), and urge others to act collectively to affect change.²⁹⁶

The second characteristic feature (action-oriented function) will be highlighted by examining the theological and ideological attitudes of revisionists towards the above-mentioned concepts before and after revisions in relation to their impact on violence-related actions. The violence-related actions associated with these concepts are: armed rebellion against the ruler, attacking tourists and Westerners in Muslim lands, attacking Christian minorities living in Muslim lands, attacking Western targets and civilians, making *hisba* by force, independently of the authority of the state, and killing Muslims who are accidentally present at the time of an attack on non-Muslims. These are the main articulations that constitute the discursive field of Jihadism and the ones that represent the jihadist production of Muslim and Islamist identities.

As the identification of culprits is essential to the articulation of oppositional identity frames, outlining these frames requires outlining who should be blamed (the attribution component of diagnostic framing). So the dissertation will also show the impact of the ideology and framing of violence and revisions on the revisionists' attitudes towards the following categories who were assigned part of the blame:²⁹⁷ rulers and governments of Islamic lands, Muslim communities, other nonviolent Islamic movements, Christian minorities, Western countries and communities, civilians, and also al-Qaeda and other jihadi movements.

²⁹⁵ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 615.

²⁹⁶ Page et al, "Framing Narratives," 153; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 615.

²⁹⁷ As social movements seek to remedy or alter a problematic situation or issue, their directed action is contingent on identification of the sources of causality, blame, and/or culpable agents. This happens by focusing blame or responsibility on specific groups and thus taking an action, whether violent or otherwise, towards these groups. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 616. For the two groups under discussion, the above named groups and entities constitute culpable agents, but in varying levels and degrees.

The above functions together constitute the three core framing tasks highlighted by framing researchers, most notably David Snow and Robert Benford. These are diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing. First, movements construct frames that 'diagnose' a condition as a problem in need of a solution. This includes attributions of liability and defining targets of blame (diagnostic framing). This diagnostic framing addresses the problem of consensus mobilisation by diagnosing some event, aspect of life or system of government as being problematic and in need of repair or change, and attributes blame or responsibility to identified culprits. It answers the question of what is or what went wrong? and "who or what is to blame? In general, the answers to such questions recast features of political or social life that were previously seen as being misfortunes or being unpleasant but tolerable facts of life as being intolerable injustices or abominations that demand transformation.²⁹⁸

Second, movements offer solutions to address the problem by stipulating specific remedies or solutions and the general means or tactics to achieve these objectives and to rebel against injustice (prognostic framing). Thus, 'prognostic framing' addresses the question of what is to be done?²⁹⁹ Finally, movements provide a rationale to motivate supporters and engender collective action (motivational framing). While potential participants may share common understandings about causation and solutions to a particular problem (i.e., they agree on both diagnostic and prognostic framing), the mobilisation or activation of ideological adherents—that is, those who subscribe to the diagnostic and prognostic framings— remains unattainable without motivational framing. Thus, motivational framing can be defined as "the elaboration of a call to arms or rationale for action that goes beyond the diagnosis and prognosis."³⁰⁰

Therefore, motivational frames help convince potential participants to practically engage in action and overcome the fear of risks often associated with collective action, thereby rendering bystanders into movement participants. These three framing processes are the main discursive mechanisms through which ideas, beliefs, and values—the stuff of ideology—and different social events are strategically linked together in a fashion that facilitates the mobilisation or support of targeted constituents and even bystanders.³⁰¹

²⁹⁸ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 124.

²⁹⁹ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 126-7.

³⁰⁰ Snow and Benford, "Ideology and Frame Resonance, 202.

³⁰¹ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 15-16; Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 128; Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 202.

While most Islamist movements agree on diagnostic framing (non- implementation of the Sharia and the necessity to implement it, corruption and injustices), they greatly differ on the prognostic framing (their offered solutions to implement the *Sharia*). Therefore, there are significant divergences over specific strategies and tactics among Islamists.³⁰² Nonetheless, the three central framing tasks do provide an analytic handle for comparing and contrasting Islamist movements in terms of ideational factors and meaning construction. Thus, framing helps fill a conceptual void and provides an analytic purchase on how to understand the interpretive work of movement actors, and thus enhances our understanding of the role ideational factors and meanings play in relation to the course and character of movements in general and of Islamist movements in particular.³⁰³

Thus, as shown above, most of the publications on Islamist movements propose that a particular set of grievances, translated into religious symbols and idioms, engenders mobilisation. However, various explanations in the social movement theory and related debates have demonstrated that other factors are inextricably linked to mobilisation patterns, including resource availability, framing resonance, and shifts in the political opportunity structure.³⁰⁴ By explaining these elements through frame analysis, together with textual analysis, the dissertation will be able to develop more sophisticated tools of analysis and a deeper comprehension of the dynamics of Islamist movements. This mixed methods approach enables the research to build a more holistic picture of the topic under investigation, ensures that the results are not methodological artefacts, and allows to compensate for the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of another. Furthermore, it is especially useful when comparatively little research has so far been conducted on the topic of the study.³⁰⁵

³⁰² Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 204.

³⁰³ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 129-30.

³⁰⁴ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 206; Snow and Benford, "Ideology and Frame Resonance," 202.

³⁰⁵ Ralph Hanke and Boris Brummans, "Communicative Framing Analysis," in Albert J. Mills, Gabrielle Durepos and Eiden Wiebe, eds., *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2010), 172-73.

Chapter Two: History, Contextualisation & Causation

Introduction

While one of the military trials of the IG members was taking place in July 1997, one of the group's activists read aloud a statement that had been signed by six of the group's former leaders. It declared a unilateral ceasefire and called upon all members to cease all acts of violence, whether perpetrated within or outside the borders of Egypt.³⁰⁶ This act was the starting point for what later became known as 'the non-violence initiative' (*mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*) or 'revisions' (*murāja'āt*), an initiative through which the heads of the IG renounced their commitment to violent methods that they had justified theologically.³⁰⁷ Ten years later, in 2007, a similar process was declared by al-Jihād Organisation, the second largest Egyptian militant group. The two revisions indicate the militants' acknowledgement of the failure of violence as a means of political change.

As framing researchers sustain, the framing of ideology is a dynamic, ongoing process, yet it does not occur in a structural or cultural vacuum. It is rather affected by the structural elements of the political and socio-cultural context in which it is embedded. The most common components of these elements are: political opportunity structures,³⁰⁸ cultural opportunities and constraints, and the targeted audiences.³⁰⁹ Therefore, this chapter highlights these structural elements and their effect on drafting the ideology of violence and revisions. It shows how various contextual factors facilitated or constrained the framing processes of al-Jihād and the IG. In order to do this, the chapter historically tracks the development of the two groups from their establishment until the present, highlights their mobilising structures, and provides

³⁰⁶ For the full wording of the statement, see Karam Zuhdī et al, *Istrātijiyyat wa Taffjirāt al-Qā'ida: Al-Akhṭā' wa al-Akhṭār* (Cairo: Maktabat al-'Ubaykān, 2005), 315.

³⁰⁷ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 19-20.

³⁰⁸ Scholars disagree on the definition of political opportunity structures. Kitschelt defines them as arrangements of resources, formal configurations and historical instances that together form the environment in which a contentious movement emerges or declines. See Herbert Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* (16, no. 01 [1986]), 58. They can be described as consistent signals to political or social actors which encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form a social movement. Thus, they might constitute an opportunity or constraint. They are changes in the institutional features, political alignments or receptive capacity of a particular political system that greatly affects the power disparity between the state and a given challenging group. This means that movements emerge and navigate within a structural framework that is in direct response to structural political opportunities. For an overview of these different definitions and functions of political opportunity structures, see Fahmy, "Muslim Democrats," 16-19. Though many scholars label these as 'political opportunity structures', in practice they also encompass social, cultural and economic factors. For more on this, see Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 13-15.

³⁰⁹ These three main contextual factors, together with other factors, will be explained below. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 628.

brief socioeconomic and political accounts of the Egyptian scene since the 1960s. These concise accounts are meant mainly to acquaint readers with the context in which the two groups arose, developed, practised violence and then retracted from it. In other words, this chapter sets the scene and defines the historical, socio-political and cultural contexts and constraints in which the ideology on violence and revisions was formed and the movements' texts were written. It briefly answers the question: what are the most important causal reasons that led the IG and al-Jihād to practise violence and then retract from it? As explained in the previous chapter, analysing texts and the framing of textual theoretical justifications would not be properly conducted if they were stripped of their contexts. Moreover, because it is necessary to verify the genuineness of the new attitudes before trying to understand and evaluate them in theological terms, the chapter also provides a discussion on whether the revisions were written under duress or as a result of genuine convictions.

To achieve this, the chapter divides the history of the two groups into six distinct chronologically arranged stages, highlighting the general features of each stage. The first stage discusses the two groups' establishment, growth and ideology, and the second stage speaks about the unity of the two groups and their collaboration in assassinating Sadat. The third stage covers their imprisonment and disengagement, while the fourth stage covers the rebuilding of the two groups, their production of literature, and their military training in Afghanistan. The fifth stage covers the confrontations between the regime and these movements and their military defeat (as well as the dissolution of al-Jihād, the coalition with al-Qaeda, and the IG revisions). The sixth stage covers al-Jihād revisions, jihadi polemics, and new developments in the IG revisions.

While doing so, the chapter also briefly highlights the structural strains and miserable living conditions of the Egyptian masses during the reign of Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak, and how they contributed to the mayhem. In order to do this, the chapter very briefly employs the political process approach together with relevant structural socio-political and economic approaches used to explain violence. By tracing contexts of the IG violent operations, the chapter argues that both the development of the events on the ground and retaliation were the main reasons behind the IG's random response to the violence of the regime. To justify this, the IG used the general justification of violence in their literature though in fact the specific religious details in the literature were not observed. The chapter also shows that revisions came after the military defeat of the two groups by the regime and after losing people's sympathy. However, before

delving into these details, the chapter starts by tracing the origins of Islamic militant movements in the 20th century and sheds light on the influence of the Arab defeat of 1967 on the rise of religious movements aimed at the restoration of the Islamic Sharia.

The General Context

The fall of the Islamic caliphate with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1924 not only put an end to 13 centuries of Islamic empires but also to the Islamic caliphate itself. This resulted in a new kind of political order through the division of the region into nation states by colonial powers, and also weakened the possibility of religiously sanctioned governance. This particular historical event constituted a distinct obstacle to the notions of unity and legitimacy of Muslim states.³¹⁰ This, together with the invasion of Arab and Islamic countries by Western powers, generated several social and political reactions and movements. Among these, Islamic movements were calling for the return to Islam, restoration of caliphate and the re-implementation of the Islamic Sharia which they saw as the only solution to the problems facing the Ummah. The first and biggest of these movements was the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) that was established in Egypt in 1928. These Islamic movements called for Islam as a comprehensive way of life that should govern the whole social, economic, political and religious life of people. The end of the colonisation of Muslim and Arab countries generated a rapid movement to reunify the Arab World under the banner of Pan-Arabism. However, Pan-Arabism failed not only in achieving its objectives but also in suppressing religious voices that demanded not only unity but also rule by God's law. Thus, the Middle East came to represent a state system reflective of the norms of Westphalian sovereignty.³¹¹ Generally speaking, it is this new system, being incompatible with the historical ideology of Islamists, that provoked Salafi Jihadists to challenge leaders in the Islamic world and international powers who maintain this status quo with a particular discourse of unity and religious legitimacy derived from their ideological understanding of Islam and Islamic history.³¹²

Though there were periods of harmony between the Egyptian regime and religious movements, the Islamic movements, having gained publicity and supporters, were eventually seen by the

³¹⁰ Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 3.

³¹¹ Fred Lawson, *Pan Arabism, Post Imperial Orders and International Norms* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006), 341.

³¹² Turner, *Religious Ideology*, 5.

ruling regimes as an immediate threat to their authority and thus a clash started. The violence of the Nasserite regime against the MB triggered radical thought and a desire of revenge. Nasser's concentration camps, systematic torture and excessive repression of the MB marked a great shift in the religious movement's attitude towards the Egyptian regime, which provoked a mutiny in 1967. This ended up with younger and more radical elements being isolated in special confined quarters. This allowed them to start an intensive discussion of religious and political affairs, and they argued that rulers who tortured Muslims just because of their commitment to the teachings of their religion could not themselves be considered Muslims even if they claimed to be so. Thus, the culture of *takfīr*, revenge and rebellion started to prevail.³¹³

Sayyid Quṭb, who is considered the godfather of Jihadism, was a prominent MB thinker who was executed by Nasser. Quṭb's writings introduced political interpretations of Islam and employed some Islamic concepts, such as the concept of *ḥākimiyya* (God's sovereignty), in a severe critique of the political regimes that do not implement the Islamic Sharia. Quṭb's thought started in the 1950s and its influence intensified after his execution in 1966. Influenced by savage torture and cruelty afflicted by the Nasser regime, Quṭb considered the regime to be *jāhili* (pagan) as it challenged the *ḥākimiyya* of God and subjugated and tortured the believers. According to Quṭb, peaceful reform from within the regime is as useless as growing seeds in the air, and the regime must be completely ousted as it challenges the purely Divine right of *ḥākimiyya*.³¹⁴ Though the *takfīrī* trend within the MB was contained quickly, Quṭb's thought was reinterpreted, framed more efficiently and acted upon by new Islamist movements that originated in late 1960s and early 1970s as offshoots of or independent from the MB whose peaceful Islamic action was considered insufficient or impractical.³¹⁵ This was the general political and cultural context that gave rise to militant Islamist movements.

Of these, al-Jihād Organisation and the IG were the biggest and most active groups that accused the regimes of disbelief and practised violence in an attempt to enforce Islamic ethos and oust what they considered apostate pagan regimes. As the history of the two groups is usually mixed

³¹³ For more elaboration on the general context at that time, see e.g., Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London & New York: Routledge, 1991), 77 ff; Kamāl Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiyya wa al-Istrātiyya al-Amrīkiyya* (Cairo: Dār Miṣr al-Maḥrūsa, 2006), 76.

³¹⁴ There is a number of writings on Quṭb's thought and influence. Of these, see, e.g., Moussali, *The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb*; William Shepard, *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism: A Translation and Critical Analysis of Social Justice in Islam* (New York: Brill, 1996).

³¹⁵ Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiyya*, 76-7. The IG was an offshoot of the MB while al-Jihād originated independently. See Muḥammad Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād: Judhūruh wa Asrāruh* (Digital version available at: https://ia601001.us.archive.org/1/items/taha_21_201412/19.pdf [downloaded 17 November 2012] 1986), 32.

and confused in the relevant literature though they are two distinct groups, this chapter provides a simplified historical account of both groups, noting the differences and commonalities. To keep the chronological order, six main stages in the history of the two groups are identified and used below for periodisation and simplification purposes.

Historical Phases

Establishment, Growth and Ideology (1968-1979)

The Arab defeat of 1967 created upheaval in the Egyptian society that sought a logical justification to the defeat, which started a stronger resurgence based upon faith.³¹⁶ The loss was deemed to be as a result of distancing from the Islamic faith and, through this interpretation, the remedy to the problems facing the nation was seen as being a return to the teachings of the religion. This interpretation of the cause and remedy became a widely held view, particularly among university students.³¹⁷

In this environment, the different jihadi movements were born. According to al-Ḍawāḥirī and Al-Sibā'ī, the first cell of al-Jihād Organisation was founded by Ayman al-Ḍawāḥirī and others in 1968. The founders were influenced by the writings and execution of Sayyid Quṭb who was described by al-Ḍawāḥirī as a forensic pathologist who skilfully anatomises the body of the society with high professionalism and technicality. Established in the Cairo suburb of Ma'ādī, this cell included al-Ḍawāḥirī, Faḍl, Nabīl al-Burāī, Ismā'īl Ṭanṭāwī, Nabīl al-Dimīrī and others, with al-Ḍawāḥirī as the emir.³¹⁸

The members were students in the school age who knew one another through the school. They used to gather in mosques reading and discussing Islamic sciences until they ended with the

³¹⁶ Al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 24; Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 77.

³¹⁷ Gerjes, "The End of the Islamist Insurgency," 602; Ibrahim Ibrahim, "Religion and Politics under Nasser and Sadat, 1952-1981," in Barbara Stowasser, ed., *The Islamic Impulse* (Washington, D.C.: Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1987), 126-27; 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*, 169.; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 4.

³¹⁸ Ayman al-Ḍawāḥirī, *Firsān Tahta Rāyat al-Nabiyy* (n. p: Al-Saḥāb Media, n. d., Ms word version available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/> [downloaded 10 November 2009]), 10-13; Hānī Al-Sibā'ī, "Al-Islāmī al-Miṣrī Hānī al-Sibā'ī Yarwī Qīṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād wa dawr 'Abd al-Salām Faraj fī al-Wiḥda ma'a al-Jamā'a wa Igthiyāl al-Sādāt," *Al-Ḥayāt Newspaper* (1 September 2002), 10; Ayman al-Ḍawāḥirī, *Al-Ḥaṣād al-Murr li al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Bayāriq, 1993), 144; Muntaṣir al-Zayyāt, *Al-Jamā'āt al-Islāmiyya: Ru'ya mina al-Dākhil* (Cairo: Dār Miṣr al-Maḥrūsa, 2005), 145; Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, "Riḥla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl min Banī Suwayf ilā Bishāwir wa al-Sudān wa al-Yaman... wa al-Nihāya fī Ṭura," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Newspaper* (18 November 2007, available at <http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=83373>, [downloaded 18 October 2010]).

books of Ibn Taymiya which heavily influenced them. They, driven by religious zeal and dissatisfaction with the prevailing circumstances, decided to defend their religion and country as they deemed proper. Like other Islamists, the Arab defeat of 1967 strengthened in them the desire of collective work in search for a practical solution as they thought that the non-implementation of the Islamic Sharia was the main reason behind all of the nation's troubles.³¹⁹ This represented the diagnostic framing of this and other jihadi movements.

Unlike al-Jihād cells which started in Lower Egypt (Cairo and the Delta), the IG started in Upper Egypt (al-Ša'īd) as student associations that were motivated by Islamic religious beliefs and orientations and aimed at restoration of what they saw as the correct Islamic creeds and practices. These Islamists' student associations started in late 1960s and later became the dominant force in Egyptian university campuses during Sadat's presidency, as Sadat, unlike Nasser who suppressed them, gave Islamists freedom and support to counterbalance his Marxist and Nasserite rivals. They managed to take over the campuses when they defeated Marxists and Leftist-Nasserites. During that time, the IG evolved into a more organised structure and had its current name in 1974. Though initially supported by Sadat's regime, Islamists soon became independent of the regime and acted independently. Their slogans and tactics directly addressed students' social problems by providing several campus services such as private busses for girls, student services and support for the needy.³²⁰ The religious discourse and symbolism of these groups soon became the tool through which the middle and lower classes expressed not only their discontentment with corruption, inequality and decadence, but also their antagonism with the very state apparatus that fostered these evils.³²¹

In this environment of relative freedom, al-Ẓawāhirī's small group and the IG managed to extend their membership. Unlike the IG, al-Jihād members were more focused on recruiting army officers for they believed that the army was the easiest and quickest means for toppling the regime. The most famous of these officers were 'Isām al-Qamarī and 'Abbūd al-Zumur who joined the Organisation on the hope that they would be able to launch a coup against the

³¹⁹ Al-Sibā'ī, "Qīṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād."

³²⁰ For more information, see Kepel, *The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 129-44; Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 74-5; Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'ā al-Islāmiyya*, 227; Walid Abdalnasser, *The Islamic Movement in Egypt: Perceptions of International Relations, 1967-1981* (London & New York: Kegan Paul International, 1994), 59-60.

³²¹ Michael Gilsenan, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Arab World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 225-6.

regime.³²² However, al-Ẓawāhirī's group was not the only group as there were other small jihadi groups such as that of Kamāl Ḥabīb, Sālīm al-Raḥḥāl and Ṣāliḥ Sariyya. They all carried the same goal of implementing the Sharia by ousting what they considered an infidel regime. During this period, there were no organisational structures or formal connections between these groups; only personal relationships connected members of the different groups.³²³

They used to receive military and spiritual training in the desert areas of Cairo especially Dahshūr and Ṣaḥṭ al-Khaṭāṭba. According to al-Sibā'ī, this was just training but there was no intention for direct clashes with the regime at that point. Al-Ẓawāhirī and other leaders' view was that immediate clashes would not achieve the intended goal of toppling the regime, for jihadists neither infiltrated the army nor gained supporters from among those who held sensitive military positions.³²⁴

On the other hand, the IG was more active in social and preaching services. For the IG, the years between 1970 and 1974 saw an increase in religious adherence among the youth and an increase in *da'wah* (Islamic preaching) as a mechanism through which people would be invited to Islam. Unlike al-Jihād, violence was not recognised by the IG as a means of establishing a Sharia-based order when one was to be founded. Violence was later resorted to when the IG began to sue force against their Nasserite and Marxist adversaries who were responsible for introducing theories, ideas and notions at university campuses that the IG affiliates considered alien to Islam, which gave rise to the idea of 'changing the evil by force'. Similarly, they did not subscribe to the taking up of arms against the state at that time as they were only concerned with propagation of Islam and *ḥisba*.³²⁵

The latter half of the 1970s saw Sadat shifting Egyptian foreign policy, where he was negotiating treaties with Israel and courting the United States Government.³²⁶ The result of one such policy, the open door economic policy (*infitāḥ*), was that it worsened the economic well-being of the poor and middle classes. In turn, this had the knock on effect of fuelling the frustration and

³²² Al-Sibā'ī, "Qisṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād;" Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 26-7; Al-Ẓawāhirī, *Firsān Taḥta Rāyat al-Nabiyy*, 14.

³²³ 'Ādil Ḥammūda, *Qanābil wa Maṣāḥif: Qisṣat Tanzīm al-Jihād* (Cairo: Sinā li al-Nashr, 1985), 115; Al-Sibā'ī, "Qisṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād." For details about these different groups see, e.g., Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 29-53.

³²⁴ Al-Sibā'ī, "Qisṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād."

³²⁵ Usāma Ḥāfiẓ, interview in al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 74-5& 79. Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 5. The impact of this on the revisions and their scope will be highlighted in the last chapter.

³²⁶ This included, e.g., Sadat's visit to the U.S. in 1975 and his visit to the Israeli Knesset in 1977; and it culminated in the 1979 signing of Camp David Peace Treaty with Israel that involved recognising Israel and naturalisation of relations with it.

anger of the devout youth.³²⁷ The IG, which by that time had become a very large organisation that had a clear hierarchy,³²⁸ and groups with Islamist motivations found it difficult to tolerate such sweeping reforms in Egyptian economic and foreign policies. In addition to this, Sadat's failure to implement the Islamic Sharia was the major concern to Islamists.³²⁹ Additionally the widespread corruption, prevalent injustice, intolerable sub-human conditions and the severe poverty of the masses created social, economic and political congestion that would eventually feed and fuel revolutionary thought.³³⁰

Islamists invested in these conditions by using them as 'injustice frames'. 'Injustice frames' is a term that refers to the injustices directed at a specific community or group and used by movement articulators to justify to their audience that a specific collective action is a proper response to rebel these injustices. These injustice frames represent any group's central component of 'diagnostic framing'.³³¹ They are meant to create a link between the movement and its objectives and the un-mobilised residents of the areas in which they are active, for frames are developed and organised to achieve the purpose of acquiring resources, recruiting new members, mobilising adherents, etc. Thus though miserable sub-human conditions and grievances were common to all, the public masses lacked the organisational structure that would enable them to express their discontent and disapproval of the status quo.

The Islamist's discourse provided both the meaning and the organisational structure for the poor un-mobilised citizens and linked them to the Islamist movement and its collective actions. As Jihadist movements, like other social movements, were seeking to remedy or alter some problematic situation (injustices that they attribute to the non-implementation of the Sharia), it

³²⁷ For more on this policy and its effects, see Nazih Ayubi, "Implementation Capability and Political Feasibility of the Open Door Policy in Egypt," in Malcolm Kerr and El-Sayed Yassin, eds., *Rich and Poor States in the Middle East: Egypt and the New Arab Order* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), 349-413.

³²⁸ Each university had a *shūrā* (consultative) council and an emir. There was also a general leader of these emirs. However, the emirs and the consultative councils of each university were operating independently. For more details, see Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 96-7.

³²⁹ Gerges, "The End of the Islamist Insurgency," 602; Kepel, *The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 148-50; Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 75-6.

³³⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 6. For an overview of these conditions and a detailed analysis of their effect on nurturing violence during that period, see, for example, Kepel, *The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 223-40; Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 75 ff.

³³¹ Building on Wilson's decomposition of ideology into three component parts, Snow and Benford divide the core framing tasks into 'diagnostic framing', 'prognostic framing', and 'motivational framing'. By pursuing these core framing tasks, social movement actors attend to the interrelated problems of 'consensus mobilisation' and 'action mobilisation'. The central element of diagnostic framing is 'injustice frames' which is defined as "a mode of interpretation—prefatory to collective noncompliance, protest, and/or rebellion— generated and adopted by those who come to define the actions of an authority as unjust." See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 615.

follows that directed action is contingent on identification of the sources of causality, blame, and/or culpable agents. This attributional component of diagnostic framing attended to this function by focusing blame or responsibility mainly on the regime and its policies. The resolution of these issues was put in the context of demolishing the established 'un-Islamic' order that fosters these evils and establishing an Islamic state (Caliphate) that would abort these evils and restore justice and welfare, which represented the motivational framing of these groups.

In this atmosphere, preaching alone was seen as insufficient by the IG as a means of changing the conditions of the country. With their numbers and influence soaring during the 1970s, the IG began using force to effect what they perceived as the correct application of Islam.³³² Their influence widened to most Egyptian universities as they imposed their rules and regulations upon students, at times in a violent manner.³³³ One of the principal motivators behind this was their distancing themselves from the MB and proving that they were not simply government tools through which Sadat could counter the Nasserites and Marxists.³³⁴

The IG and al-Jihād leaders and members disagreed with the MB due to their disapproval of the political pragmatism demonstrated by the MB and emphasised the key role a traditionalist Salafi creed had in shaping religious practices. Another point of contention they had with the MB was the Mb's moderate tolerance of other Islamic schools of thought, like the Sufis and Shia.³³⁵ This, together with their clashes with Marxists and leftist students, led the IG leaders to regard the use of physical force, which they termed jihad, as one of three principal means by which they could fulfil their objectives.³³⁶ The MB, in contrast, completely dismissed the use of violence as a vehicle for political reformation.³³⁷

Revival of the Sharia through capturing power by armed force, and the foregoing tactics, training and interaction with people constitute the second core element in the framing process of the two groups, namely 'prognostic framing', where articulation of a proposed solution to the problem, a plan of action, and the strategies for carrying out the plan are drafted to addresses

³³² Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 85.

³³³ These regulations included hijab for women, separation between the two sexes and others.

³³⁴ Al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 33; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 6-7.

³³⁵ Ḥabīb, *Tahawwulāt al-Haraka al-Islāmiyya*, 30-1.

³³⁶ The other two means were preaching and *hisba*. See al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī* (N.P.: Minbar al-Tawhīd wa al-Jihād: <http://www.tawhed.ws> [downloaded 10 November 2009] 1984), 1.

³³⁷ The MB leaders recognised the futility of violence and focused on peaceful political opposition after they were released by Sadat from prison and after containing the *takfīrī* thought that arose among some of the members in the Nasserite concentration camps. See, e.g., Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 97-8; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 7.

the important question of what is to be done, as well as the problems of consensus and action mobilisation.³³⁸ Thus, in the second half of the 1970s, the power of the Islamist organisations so increased that the Sadat regime saw them as a direct threat to its existence. Hence, Sadat took strict measures against members of these organisations, incarcerating many and depriving them of electoral rights at university campuses.³³⁹ This intensified their injustice frames and pushed towards a more radical response that culminated in Sadat's murder.

Unity and Assassination of Sadat (1979-1981)

Al-Jihād multiple factions were acting separately until they were united in 1979 and then the unified jihadi factions made further coalition with the IG. The unity of jihadists occurred when their struggle with Sadat was on the rise as Sadat changed his policy when he felt that Islamists got strong and independent enough to threaten his rule. Sadat's peace with Israel, hosting of the Iranian Shah who was ousted by the Iranian 'Islamic revolution', and mocking of Islamic symbols all added more fuel to the fire and increased the fury and anger of the already frustrated youth. To them, peace with the 'Zionist enemy' was high treason and the antagonistic discourse of Sadat at that time deepened their feelings of an immediate governmental threat that needed to be toppled before it would hunt all of them. Sadat attacked several religious scholars depicting them as dogs and mad and mocked some Islamic symbols such as the hijab which he described as a tent. In the investigations of Sadat's murder, the assassins said they killed Sadat because he made peace with the Jews and betrayed the Palestinian cause, did not implement the Islamic Sharia, insulted Muslim scholars, imprisoned Islamists, courted Christians at the expense of Muslims and helped them infuriate Muslims, permitted alcohol and nightclubs, mocked the hijab, behaved antagonistically towards issues of the Muslim world, separated between religion and politics, oppressed the poor (by his open door economic policy) and created widespread corruption.³⁴⁰

Only in this critical atmosphere did the jihadi groups tolerate their ideological and organisational differences— driven by the common goal of establishing the Islamic Sharia and ousting what they all considered an apostate regime— as the need for collective action overcame the need

³³⁸ For more on these theoretical aspects of framing, see, e.g., Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 616-18.

³³⁹ There are numerous examples of such harassments and detentions, but the most famous of all is Sadat's decision to detain 1536 political activists from all opposition groups in 1981.

³⁴⁰ For more details on this, see, e.g., Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 122-3.

for agreement on ideological nuances.³⁴¹ This proves that the extent to which government policies in foreign and domestic affairs are incompatible with the mission and vision of an Islamist group influences the level of antagonism towards the regime and provides a stimulus for collective action.³⁴² Thus, the intensifying appeal of the jihadi frames and the success of their mobilisation structures stemmed from the interactive effect of the growing power of Islamists and the escalating repression of the regime that was successfully used by Jihadists as an injustice frame. Moreover, the state was beginning to face a legitimacy crisis by the end of the 1970s due to its unpalatable domestic and foreign policies.³⁴³

This enabled the author of the famed pamphlet: *Al-Jihād al-Farīḍa al-Ghā'iba* [*Jihad: The Neglected duty*]³⁴⁴, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Faraj, to unify jihadist groups in 1980. Faraj was a mechanical engineer from Lower Egypt who was influenced by the writings of Ibn Taymiya and Sayyid Quṭb and had a marvelous enthusiasm to his dream of establishing the Islamic caliphate. The pamphlet argued mainly that the neglect of 'jihad' was the reason for backwardness, frustration and humiliation of the Muslim Ummah. He recalled several classical Islamic fatwas especially those of Ibn Taymiya regarding fighting the Tartars and his fatwa on a city called Mardīn which was considered neither an abode of Islam nor an abode of disbelief.³⁴⁵ He compared these situations to the Egyptian scene and applied Ibn Taymiya's rulings to the Egyptian regime concluding that the regime was infidel like the Tartars and thus must be ousted and that Egypt was not an abode of Islam because it was governed by infidel laws like the city of Mardīn. In addition, he specified sections in his pamphlet for refuting the arguments of those who seek change by social, political or other peaceful means. Though the issues discussed by Faraj were not unfamiliar to many jihadists, they were not previously coined together in one book, presented efficiently and applied to contemporary regimes in such a way as Faraj did.

Meanwhile, the IG, which was located mainly in Upper Egypt, was looking for presence and popular support in Lower Egypt and managed by the end of 1970s to have forged relations with

³⁴¹ Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 66-9; Al-Sibā'ī, "Qīṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād," Al-Zawāhirī, *Firsān Taḥta Rāyat al-Nabiyy*, 26-7.

³⁴² This is the main thesis of the state legitimacy approach. See Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 18.

³⁴³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 177.

³⁴⁴ This is considered as the manifesto for Sadat's assassins. It is available in Arabic on the jihadi websites. See, e.g., Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Faraj, *Al-Jihād: Al-Farīḍa al-Ghā'iba* (N.P.: Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād <http://www.tawhed.ws> [downloaded 10 November 2009] N.D). It was translated into English and published by J. Jansen in the appendix of his book on Sadat's assassination. See Jansen, *the Creed of Sadat's Assassins*.

³⁴⁵ These fatwas and concepts will be discussed and analysed in detail in the next chapter.

other Salafi Jihadist groups across Egypt.³⁴⁶ Faraj was introduced to Karam Zuhdī, one of the IG historical leaders, and an agreement on cooperation and joint collective action was made between the IG and the Jihadi groups despite the differences between them. The objective was to assassinate Sadat and capture some governmental premises, followed by announcing a revolt in the TV to call the public for participation in toppling the regime. On 6 October 1981 they co-assassinated Sadat and two days later the IG launched an assault upon the Asyut security administration. Their goal in this was twofold; to gain control over the governorate and catalyse public action against the regime. Although they managed to assassinate Sadat and the IG were successful in capturing government institutions, such as police stations and the Security Administration, in Asyut the assassins and other members were caught and the government launched a sweeping counterattack that resulted in killing some of the IG members and detentions of most of the IG and al-Jihad leaders as well as a large number of members.³⁴⁷

Imprisonment and the Split (1981- 1984)

After Sadat's assassination and the IG subsequent attack on Asyut, Islamists were captured in massive governmental raids, and the trials continued for two years. Large numbers of Islamists were imprisoned while the four assassins and Faraj were executed. As each group of the co-assassins of Sadat had its own thought and distinct features, they disagreed in prison and separated. This was mainly due to disagreements about leadership, ideology and tactics.

Regarding leadership, the IG wanted to appoint its mufti Dr. 'Umar 'Abd al-Raḥmān, as the leader but al-Jihād figures objected because 'Abd al-Raḥmān was not a military man and was blind; arguing that in Islam leadership cannot be assigned to the blind in military matters. Al-Jihād figures wanted to appoint the imprisoned officer 'Abbūd al-Zumur, but the IG argued that leadership of the captive (prisoner) is forbidden in Islam.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁶ As shall be discussed later, the IG was the dominant Islamist organisation in Upper Egypt (*al-Ṣa'īd*) particularly in Asyut, al-Minyā and Sūhāj governorates, while al-Jihād factions were more active in lower Egypt (the Delta, especially Cairo and Alexandria).

³⁴⁷ For further details on the process of assassination and the attack on Asyut security administration, see, e.g., Jansen, *the Creed of Sadat's Assassins*; Muhammad Hasanain Haikal, *Autumn of Fury: The Assassination of Sadat* (New York: Random House, 1983); Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*; Ḥammūda, *Qanābil wa Maṣāḥif*; Abū al-lā Mādī, interview in 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*, 146-7; Al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 35; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 7.

³⁴⁸ Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, "Qīṣṣat Murāja'āt al-Jihād," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Newspaper* (19 November 2007, available at: <http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=83478>) (downloaded 19 October 2010); Al-Sibā'ī, "Qīṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād."

The disagreement in ideology was regarding the *takfīr* of rulers' supporters and soldiers. While the IG considers the ruler only as apostate, al-Jihād considered both the ruler and his soldiers and supporters to be apostates. This disagreement branches from the concept known as '*al-udhr bi al-jahl*' (excuse due to ignorance). The concept means that if someone has committed an act of disbelief as a result of 'ignorance', they should be excused and saved from punishment. Al-Jihād argued that if the violating person did not exert sufficient effort to gain knowledge about that, then that person is considered apostate and must be punished. The difference in understanding and implementing this principle had serious implications on judging the soldiers and assistants of what militant Islamists perceived as apostate regimes. The IG believed that the soldiers and assistants of the apostate rulers were not apostates due to their ignorance and therefore those soldiers are still Muslims. On the other hand, al-Jihād leaders argued that both soldiers and leaders of these regimes are apostates because they have not exerted enough effort to learn and therefore cannot be protected by the concept of *al-udhr bi al-jahl*. Due to the disagreement about this concept, the IG accused al-Jihād of following non-Sunni 'deviations' and allying with *takfīrī* groups which the IG did not consider as Sunnis due to its strong disapproval with the issuing *takfīr* against anybody other than the ruler.³⁴⁹

The dispute about tactics occurred in the first place regarding the attack on Asyut security administration in 1981. The IG said it was a correct action but al-Jihād viewed it as a useless action as it caused lots of bloodshed and led to the capture of a large number of activists. Another more important tactical difference was that the IG preferred public action in mosques, streets and universities through preaching and *ḥisba*, while al-Jihād preferred secrecy and underground action in preparation for a military coup which al-Jihād leaders thought of as the fastest and most effective way of ousting the regime and establishing the Sharia. Thus their plans concentrated more on infiltrating the army.³⁵⁰ As each party stuck to its own view, separation was the outcome.

Rebuilding, Military Training in Afghanistan and Production of Literature (1984-1989)

Only after the trials and the release of the acquitted members and those who had short prison sentences did al-Jihād activists start to slowly recover and rebuild the Organisation. However,

³⁴⁹ See Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 241-2; Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 608; Al-Sibā'ī, "Qiṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād."

³⁵⁰ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 79; Al-Sibā'ī, "Qiṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād;" Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥarka al-Islāmiyya*, 26-7.

inside prison, the IG was active and managed to recruit greater numbers of Lower Egyptians, which widened the membership of the Group and expanded its logistic and geographical existence. Additionally, by 1984 a number of IG prisoners who had served their sentences and were released made links with members who were new to the group. Thus, the time in focus saw significant efforts to re-establish the group, following the devastation it had faced at the hands of the Egyptian military and security forces due to their assassination of Sadat. Due to the fact that the former leaders were imprisoned, this task of rebuilding was steered by the second-in-line commanders.³⁵¹

So, the IG managed not only to rebuild itself but also to expand from universities and mosques to the street through preaching, charitable and social activities such as helping the poor and offering free and low-cost healthcare and other social services,³⁵² to attract and link people to the Group, which helped spread their cause and ideology. In addition to this, new members from Lower Egypt helped old members in Upper Egypt to widen their areas of activity across Cairo and other cities in Lower Egypt. This explains the group's spread in Lower Egypt, after it had been mainly concentrated in Upper Egypt. There were also two distinct groups within the ranks of the IG; those who were incarcerated, which included almost all the charismatic leaders, and another group who were free, outside the confines of prison. The latter group consisted of grassroots members and some second-in command commanders.³⁵³

The released members undertook the implementation of the mobilisation and recruitment structures by spreading the IG's philosophy through propagation, social relations, and the distribution of pamphlets authored by those in prison, as well as piety sessions in mosques. These all, especially mosque attendance, were occasions for collective experience of embodied forms of piety. This shared experience through rituals could be incorporated into political formation and action. Potential or actual recruits are entered into programs of discipline and piety-inducement, through prayers and religious study which also involves control of the body that sustains observance of the reproduced codes - sexual abstinence for example. The assertion of a Muslim identity associated with these practices places adherents on a continuum ranging from a position of a *multazim* (practising the religion) and *mutadayyin* (pious) to that of Islāmī (Islamist or activist). The sliding from one position to another would be examined in context and

³⁵¹ Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 609; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 12.

³⁵² Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiyya*, 91.

³⁵³ Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 609; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 12.

cannot be determined a priori. So, the move from a practising to Islamist or activist would be as much shaped by changing identity frames as by mobilising structures. Therefore, Islamists' networks of social relations constituted the setting for oppositional activism.³⁵⁴

The above constitutes some mobilising structures³⁵⁵ of Islamists who anchor themselves in spaces that tend to practise and protect the religion and work in opposition to the state. In doing so, they draw on participants from familial, religious and employment networks that tend to be neighbourhood based, making use of the resources that are made available by these networks. However, they were constrained by limited formal organisation and the existing institutional set-up that limited the context in which they operate and which can be described as repressive.³⁵⁶ Therefore, during this period Jihadists did not conduct acts of violence as this would have instigated the regime against them again. So the 1980s was a period of calm between the regime and Islamists as the powers of the latter were so weakened that the regime felt they were too fragile to represent a serious threat to the state.³⁵⁷ Islamists too were busy rebuilding themselves. Thus there were no important instances of violence conducted by the IG or al-Jihād against the regime in this period.³⁵⁸ Yet, the IG and al-Jihād rebuilding process was completed in Afghanistan.

During the second half of the 1980s, the Egyptian regime allowed Islamists to travel to Afghanistan to fight against the Soviets. The government facilitated this to achieve double gains: to get rid of jihadists by sending them outside the country where they were likely to be killed or absorbed in another society, and to respond to the American demands of helping in the Afghans' war against the Soviet troops. This lined with the desire of the enthusiastic religious youth who viewed participation in this 'jihad' as a religious obligation, in addition to their desire of seizing the opportunity of receiving field military training outside Egypt in preparation for the awaited confrontation with the local regime.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁴ Ismail, "Islamist Movements," 401-2.

³⁵⁵ Mobilising structures generally refer to both formal and informal networks (family and friends, religious spaces, voluntary organisations) where a movement is able to attract bystanders, mobilise its adherents and engage actors in collective action. For more on this, see Fahmy, "Muslim Democrats," 19-20.

³⁵⁶ Ismail, "Islamist Movements," 402.

³⁵⁷ For more on this point see Nazih Ayubi, "Domestic Politics," in L.C. Harris, ed., *Egypt: Internal Challenges and Regional Stability* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1988), 60-3.

³⁵⁸ Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥarka al-Islāmiyya*, 105-6.

³⁵⁹ Hishām Mubārak, *Al-Irhābiyyūn Qādimūn: Dirāsa Muqārana bayna Mawqif al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn wa Jamā'āt al-Jihād min Qaḍiyyat al-'Unf* (Cairo: Maktabat Miṣr al-Maḥrūsa, 1995), 267; Al-Sibā'i, "Qiṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād;" 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*, 148; Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 119-20.

Al-Jihād members including al-Ṣawāhirī and Faḍl travelled to Afghanistan, which allowed them to interact with and transport their thought to more jihadi recruits through jihadi training camps and teaching sessions.³⁶⁰ The theological credentials of Faḍl constituted a great asset in the ideological mobilisation of the recruits. Faḍl,³⁶¹ who fled Egypt after the assassination of Sadat in 1981, headed towards Pakistan to help treat the wounded in the Afghani war where he was appointed as a director of the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Hospital in Peshawar. Meanwhile he was selected by the Organisation's leaders as the emir due to his top theological credentials and he was given the name 'Abd al-Qādir b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, because he did not want others to know who the actual emir was for he preferred subterranean action and committed himself to learning and teaching religious knowledge.³⁶² It was al-Ṣawāhirī who took charge of executive and logistical leadership, and members used to give their *bay'a* (oath of allegiance) to him. Thus, only a few members knew the actual emir while the rest believed that the emir was al-Ṣawāhirī as he was in charge of the executive leadership and the one to whom the *bay'a* was given.³⁶³

Thus, jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan was an optimal source of inspiration and mobilisation to Jihadists. In this environment of jihad and warfare, the arguments and thoughts of confrontation greatly appealed to the enthusiastic youth who met one another there, though many of them had not belonged to a specific jihadi group before. Frames of jihad, caliphate, *ḥākimiyya*, etc., were used as mobilising factors that united youth who were coming from different orientations and backgrounds but shared the same goal of jihad and supporting the religion. Therefore, it was a golden opportunity for al-Jihād leaders to revive the Organisation, making use of the general atmosphere of jihad in the ideological mobilisation of adherents and

³⁶⁰ Ismā'īl al-Sharīf, "Ismā'īl Najl al-Duktūr Faḍl Yarwī li al-Jarīda Qiṣṣat Wālidih ma'a al-Jihād mina al-Ta'sīs ilā al-Murāja'a," *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (Kuwait, 26-28 November 2007).

³⁶¹ His full name is Sayyid Imām 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Sharīf, aka Dr. Faḍl and 'Abd al-Qādir ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. He was a native of Banī Suwaif, where he was born and brought up. It is a city 100 kilometres south of Cairo, Egypt. His family were devout, which was reflected in his upbringing as a pious, distinguished student. In 1968, he graduated from high school as one of the top students in his class, making him eligible to enrol in the Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University. He finished his master's degree in plastic surgery in 1978 and worked at Suez Canal University until 1981. Al-Sharīf, "Ismā'īl Najl al-Duktūr Faḍl," Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 7.

³⁶² Al-Khaṭīb, "Riḥla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl."

³⁶³ As al-Ṣawāhirī, who is the current leader of al-Qaeda, was captured and given short prison sentence after Sadat's assassination, he had the chance to communicate with other jihadi prisoners, whereas Faḍl fled Egypt before Sadat's assassination. In addition, al-Ṣawāhirī gained fame during these trials as his ability to speak fluent English enabled him to speak to international media and explain the jihadi thought and vision. Al-Zayyāt, *Al-Jamā'āt al-Islāmiyya*, 246; Hānī al-Sibā'ī, "Al-Islāmī al-Miṣrī Hānī al-Sibā'ī" Yarwī Qiṣṣat Khilāf al-Jihād ma'a al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya wa Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyin ilā Afghanistan," *Al-Hayāt Newspaper* (2 September 2002), 15; Al-Khaṭīb, "Riḥla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl."

from the skills and expertise gained from warfare in military training and preparation. Thus, al-Jihād Organisation was fully rebuilt and re-mobilised in Afghanistan in 1987/88.³⁶⁴

Although al-Jihād Organisation at this time was looking for expanding its membership, it used to carefully select its new members.³⁶⁵ This accounts for the Organisation's small size compared with the IG. Another reason why the IG is larger in size and more active than al-Jihād is because of its ability to address larger sections of the society by having wider frames than those of al-Jihād. While al-Jihād restricts its central framing to purely dogmatic issues of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* which appeal only to limited sections of the society, the IG has the wider framing of jihad, *da'wa* and *ḥisba* and addressed more social and economic problems of the society in a more coherent and interrelated fashion. This confirms the hypothesis of some framing researchers that "the larger the range of problems covered by a frame, the larger the range of social groups that can be addressed with the frame and the greater the mobilisation capacity of the frame."³⁶⁶

This process of recruitment outside Egypt coincided with a similar process of recruitment inside Egypt where new members were recruited and sent to Afghanistan to perform jihad and receive militarily training. However, Faḍl and other al-Jihād leaders had the view that direct confrontations with the local regime must not start until sufficient military training and greater numbers of mobilised adherents and resources were obtained. Therefore, they trained the youth to keep them prepared for confrontation at the suitable time. Thus, the thought of the leaders of al-Jihād Organisation was mainly based on quick wide scale military attack after having enough time and resources that would support that action.³⁶⁷

After the war, Jihadists returned with a good degree of military training and a mobilised ideology. They had acquired military skills and techniques in guerrilla warfare that would be utilised in their fights with the local regime.³⁶⁸ The above changes in the structure of political and cultural opportunities were reflected on the ability of the two groups to successfully

³⁶⁴ Interview with Ayman al-Ḍawāhiri in Mubārak, *Al-Irḥābiyyūn Qādimūn*, 269; Al-Sibā'ī, "Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyīn ilā Afghānistān,"; 'Iṣām Dirāz, *Al-Ā'idūn min Afghānistān: Ma Lahum wa ma 'Alayhim* (Cairo: Al-Dār al-Miṣriyya li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1993), 37.

³⁶⁵ Al-Sibā'ī, "Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyīn ilā Afghānistān."

³⁶⁶ J Gerhards and D Rucht, "Mesomobilization: Organizing and Framing in Two Protest Campaigns in West Germany," *American Journal of Sociology* (98, no.3 [November 1992]), 580.

³⁶⁷ Al-Sibā'ī, "Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyīn ilā Afghānistān," Mubārak, *Al-Irḥābiyyūn Qādimūn*, 269. For details about al-Qamarī, his thought and role in the jihadi movement, see al-Ḍawāhiri, *Firsān Taḥta Rāyat al-Nabiyy*, 41-52.

³⁶⁸ 'Alī, *Al-Muqāmara al-Kubrā*, 148; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 13.

mobilise adherents and resources and facilitated collective action and collective action frames, which was reflected in their literature and activities following their return to Egypt.³⁶⁹

Social and Organisational Structure

Regarding the social structure of al-Jihād, Ayubi notes that the militants were mostly university graduates or students, especially in scientific subjects. In terms of socio-economic background, active Jihadists belonged mostly to a certain segment within the lower middle classes which is economically humble but which rates relatively high on the scale of literacy, mobility and political consciousness. Also, they tended to be urban but with recent rural or small town backgrounds. Being still quite close to their recent rural and provincial origins, the educated militants who dominated the leadership of al-Jihād in the seventies had managed by the beginning of the 1980s—and with the help of their kinship networks—to break into the ranks of the lower middle classes at large and to recruit important elements from this class. Therefore, Ayubi concludes, ‘al-Jihād members are firmly rooted in the social and popular map of Egypt.’³⁷⁰

As for the geographical locations of al-Jihād activists, Gilles Kepel states that al-Jihād movement had two bases one in big cities including Cairo, Giza and a few small Delta towns while the other in Upper Egypt, concentrated in particular in the three provinces of Al-Minyā, Asyut and Sūhāj.³⁷¹ It should be noted that Ayubi and Kepel are speaking about the unified al-Jihād Movement that comprised members of al-Jihād Organisation and the IG. Of the two groups, The IG was concentrated in Upper Egypt while al-Jihād Organisation was concentrated in Lower Egypt or the Delta.

The fact that the Jihadi movement was dominant in Cairo’s slums and deprived areas of Upper Egypt indicates how the socioeconomically deprived segments can provide a fertile ground of recruitment and participation in movement’s collective actions when targeted and incorporated

³⁶⁹ For a detailed analysis of the relationship between changes in the structure of political opportunities and movement mobilisation, and how political opportunity structures constrain or facilitate collective action framing, see, e.g., D McAdam, et al, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Framing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); John Evans, “Multi-Organizational Fields and Social Movement Organization Frame Content: The Religious Pro-Choice Movement,” *Social Inquiry* (67, no. 4 [1997]), 451-69.

³⁷⁰ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 81-84. For more information on this, see Nazih Ayubi, “The Political Revival of Islam: The Case of Egypt,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (12, no. 4 [December 1980]), 481-99; Saad Eddin Ibrahim, “Anatomy of Egypt’s Militants Islamic Groups: Methodological Note and Preliminary Findings,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (13, no. 4 [Dec. 1980]), 423-53. For more details about the jobs and positions of the members, see Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 200-2.

³⁷¹ Kepel, *the Prophet and Pharaoh*, 22& 217. For more on the geographical locations and distribution of the members of the Organisation, see Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 206.

into an appealing discursive strategy that is specifically meant for recruitment and mobilisation.³⁷² This was utilised by Islamists whose religious discourse invested in cultural, economic and socio-political conditions to become effective and tactical in mobilising recruits and securing their content heart-driven participation in the movement's collective action.³⁷³

On the organisational internal level, al-Jihād Organisation was based on a "kind of 'democratic centralism', and a system of commissars (*mas'uli al-Tanzim*). On the central level the organisation is said to have had a governing 'scholars' council' and a 'consultation council', as well as three commissions, one for armament, one for finance, and one for preaching. At a lower level there are believed to have been revolutionary committees and mosque units, in addition to well-armed militias formed of student and skilled worker elements."³⁷⁴

On the other hand, the IG was organised with a clear chain of command, and two kinds of leadership. The first were the compelling leaders of old who served the group as spiritual leaders, following their sentencing in 1981 as a result of Sadat's assassination. These leaders all had lengthy sentences and were behind bars at the time the non-violence initiative took effect. The IG leaders of this description, and members of the Consultative Council who drafted the literature of violence and revisions were: 'Alī al-Sharīf,³⁷⁵ 'Āšim 'Abd al-Mājid,³⁷⁶ Fu'ād al-Dawālībī,³⁷⁷ Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān,³⁷⁸ 'Iṣām Darbāla,³⁷⁹ Karam Zuhdī,³⁸⁰ Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm,³⁸¹ and

³⁷² This is the main thesis of structural socioeconomic approaches explained in chapter 1.

³⁷³ Abdullah Al-Otaibi, "Knowledge/Power, War, Ethics and Politics in the Discourse of Egypt's Militant Islamist Movements: 1970-1995," (PhD dissertation, University of Denver, 1999), 346.

³⁷⁴ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 79.

³⁷⁵ Al-Sharīf was born in 1956 in Naj' Hammādī, Qīnā governorate. He got a BA in Arabic from Dār al-'Ulūm faculty, Cairo University. He was the emir of the IG in Qīnā governorate before he was arrested and sentenced to life in 1981. He was released in 2004. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 29.

³⁷⁶ 'Abd al-Mājid was born in 1958 in al-Minyā governorate and obtained a bachelor degree in mechanical engineering from Asyut University. He also got a BA in Arabic from Asyut University. Like his fellows, he was arrested in 1981 and sentenced to life. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 29.

³⁷⁷ Al-Dawālībī was born in Al-Minyā in 1953 and got a certificate of business. He was arrested in 1981 and sentenced to life but was finally released in 2005. Before imprisonment, he used to work as a government employee. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 29.

³⁷⁸ 'Abd al-Raḥmān was born in Sūhāj in 1953, and he got a bachelor of mechanical engineering from Asyut University. He was arrested after Sadat's assassination in 1981 and was imprisoned for 20 years and then released in 2001. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 112.

³⁷⁹ Darbāla was born in Al-Minyā in 1957, and he got a Bachelor of Arts in Arabic from al-Minyā University. During imprisonment, he got a BA in History from Al-Minyā University and a postgraduate diploma in Law from 'Īn Shams University. He was sentenced to life in 1981. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 29.

³⁸⁰ Zuhdī was born in al-Minya governorate, and married the sister of Dr. 'Umar 'Abd al-Raḥmāna, the spiritual leader and mufti of the IG. He got a bachelor from the Cooperation Academy in Asyut and a degree in Law, during his imprisonment, from Cairo University. He then joined postgraduate studies to obtain a master's degree in law from Cairo University. He was arrested in 1981 as a collaborator in Sadat's assassination and was sentenced to life. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 28.

Usāma Ḥāfiẓ.³⁸² It is noteworthy that no one of these leaders has been a graduate of a religious institution,³⁸³ nor did they succeed in recruiting or attracting graduates or students of theological or religious faculties. This would indicate that they were not part of the official religious establishment and that they did not have the religious education that would qualify them to take action based on sound well-established religious discourse. These heads formed the IG *Shūrā* (consultative) Council. Of these, Karam Zuhdī and Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm are cofounders of the IG,³⁸⁴ while the principal characters involved in the group's writings at this stage were Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, 'Iṣām Darbāla, and 'Āṣim 'Abd al-Mājid.³⁸⁵

Those Charismatic heads of the group only began to produce literature while being incarcerated when they had the opportunity to put their thoughts in writing. This was in addition to intensive teaching and mobilisation of members. These books³⁸⁶ were written in the period between 1983 and 1989 and they provided the spiritual and socio-political legitimisation of the use of force against the state and its citizens. Characterised by an array of repression, isolation and torture, the conditions they faced in prison was likely to have been a key factor that contributed to the authoring of works related to radicalism.³⁸⁷ Written by leaders who had been sentenced to death and were experiencing severe torture, these books were written under conditions that were inhumane, which fuels radical beliefs and practises.³⁸⁸

³⁸¹ Ibrāhīm is the chief ideologue of the IG and the author of the majority of its new literature. He was born in Dayrūt, a town in the Upper Egyptian governorate of Asyut. He got a BA in medicine and worked in Dayrūt Central Hospital. He was arrested in 1981 and was sentenced to life. During imprisonment, he got a bachelor degree in Islamic Studies from Al-Minyā University in 1991 and a degree in Law from Cairo University in 1998. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 28.

³⁸² Ḥāfiẓ was born in Al-Minyā in 1953, and he got a bachelor of engineering after which he worked for the Administration of Housing in Asyut. He was the IG emir of al-Minyā governorate. He was arrested in 1981 and was imprisoned for 10 years after which he was released but soon re-detained under the Egyptian emergency law to neutralise his activities. He was finally released in 2004. During prison period, he got a BA in Islamic Studies from the Faculty of Arts, al-Minyā University. Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 29.

³⁸³ For example, 'Āṣim 'Abd al-Mājid, Usāma Ḥāfiẓ and Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān have bachelors of engineering, Fu'ād al-Dawālībī and 'Alī al-Sharīf have studied commerce. Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm has studied medicine, 'Iṣām Darbāla has a bachelor of arts, and Karam Zuhdī has a bachelor from the Cooperation Academy in Asyut. So, their education is anything but theological. This finding matches the findings of Christopher Boucek in his study of Saudi ex-militants where he confirmed that many of the radicals had little to no formal religious training and therefore were particularly susceptible to extremist propaganda. See Christopher Boucek, *Saudi Arabia's "soft" Counterterrorism Strategy: Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Aftercare* (Washington Dc. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2008), 14-15.

³⁸⁴ Ashour, "A world without Jihad," 96-7.

³⁸⁵ Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 104; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 9-10.

³⁸⁶ A detailed discussion of the concepts related to violence in these books is provided in chapter 5.

³⁸⁷ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 102.

³⁸⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 11- 12.

This was the same for Faḍl who wrote his two books in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sudan between 1988 and 1993 within an environment of warfare and chasing.³⁸⁹ Therefore, apart from Faraj's pamphlet, neither al-Jihād nor the IG produced their own writings except after imprisonment that followed Sadat's assassination. Before that, they used to recruit members through oral preaching and discourse, small leaflets and by reference to some arguments of classical Muslim scholars such as Ibn Taymiya and Ibn al-Qayyim.

The other type of leadership was the 'second-in-line commanders' who had served as organisational and decision-making leaders since the mid-1980s. They tended to be younger advocates who joined the group in the late 1970s and early 80s and were given short prison sentences in the trials that followed Sadat's killing. These commanders would highly respect and follow the instructions of the historical leaders.³⁹⁰ Therefore, unity, organisation and the command chain were features of the IG that they became known for. Any decision that had to be made would be taken by the Consultative Council, who would vote for a majority course of action. This decision would then be communicated to the second-in-line commanders who would then action it through the grassroots members. Members of the group were known for their loyalty and reverence to the group's leaders, so any decision made by the leaders would be respected and followed.³⁹¹

Confrontations and Military Defeat (1989-1997)

The success of jihadists in removing the Soviet threat from Afghanistan made them believe that they can similarly enforce political change inside their local communities through the use of force, and granted empirical credibility for their framing. The fact that violence and confrontations intensified in Egypt after the successful removal of the soviet from Afghanistan and the triumphant return of the militants confirms the importance of what framing researchers call 'empirical credibility'.

³⁸⁹ Details about this literature are given in chapters 3 and 5.

³⁹⁰ Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 604-5.

³⁹¹ Al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 76-7; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 9-10. It will be explained later how the unity of the IG facilitated processes of violence and revisions, unlike the fragmentation of al-Jihād groups which constrained their revisions.

Empirical credibility refers to the apparent fit between a movement's frames and events in the world, a factor that greatly affects the resonance of the collective action framing.³⁹² The diagnostic and prognostic claims of the two groups could be empirically verified by the successful removal of the soviets through the general framing of jihad and the establishment of an Islamic rule in Afghanistan; thus doing the same in Egypt was practically within the realm of possibility. As emphasised by framing researchers, the claimed connection between the frame and the real world does not have to be generally believable, but it suffices to be believable to some segment of prospective or actual adherents, and therefore, "empirical credibility is in the eyes of the beholder."³⁹³

The extra motive and credibility gained from the Afghani war further encouraged members of al-Jihād to clandestinely train themselves and prepare for a quick overwhelming military coup as per their ideology, while the IG, whose ideology preferred public action, became more active and started forcing its etiquettes and rules on areas where it had strong presence, which strongly alarmed the regime. On the other hand, the overwhelming electoral victory the Islamists achieved in Algeria at that time was a strong message to the Egyptian regime that Islamists would represent a serious threat to its legitimacy and power if they were allowed free elections and social or political work space. This was reflected in the political alienation and the excessively repressive measures imposed by the regime on Islamist movements at that time, such as wide scale arrests, referral to military justice, intensive systematic torture, raids, etc., to neutralise any possible military or political threats posed by religious movements in general and jihadists in particular.³⁹⁴

In addition, the regime was alarmed by the success of the group's growth in Lower Egypt and their attempts to effect change by force what the members saw as 'un-Islamic' practices, in a clear challenge to the authority of the state. Examples of using force by members of the Group to implement Islamic rules included punishing women who do not wear hijab, burning

³⁹² Frame resonance refers to the capacity of a frame to resonate with potential adherents. When a specific frame draws upon indigenous cultural symbols, language and identities, it is more likely to reverberate with prospective joiners, thus enhancing mobilisation. Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and Social Movement," 202-3; Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 16.

³⁹³ J M Jasper and J D Poulsen's, "Recruiting Strangers and Friends: Moral Shocks and Social Networks in Animal Rights and Anti-Nuclear Protests," *Social Problems* (42, no. 4 [November 1995]), 496; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 620.

³⁹⁴ Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥarka al-Islāmiyya*, 106.

nightclubs and video shops and preventing dancers and singers from performing in wedding parties.³⁹⁵

The regime reacted by suppressing the IG advocates. In 1990, in an attempt to stifle this suppression, the group issued the so-called 'six demands appeal'. However, the government took no notice of the demands, continued its repressive measures and assassinated the IG spokesperson, 'Alā' Muḥyī al-Dīn on 2 August 1990.³⁹⁶ The escalating governmental repression and the assassination of the IG spokesperson provoked the most violent confrontations with the regime as the IG responded quickly by assassinating the Egyptian head of Parliament Rif'at al-Maḥjūb on 12 August 1990 and subsequently the government increased its repression. This explains why violence intensified in the first half of the 1990s and why security raids against Islamists in general was so severe in the 1990s though there was a period of calm in 1980s.³⁹⁷ As Toth notes, "the accumulative effects of constant government arrest, torture, and humiliation. . . pushed pious activists across the thin line that heretofore had separated them from those committed to mayhem."³⁹⁸

This marked the activation of the IG third means of change: jihad. Thus, retaliatory violence, supported by the general theorisation in the literature, pushed the IG members to target the state, Copts and tourists with violent operations in retaliation for the Government's attacks against them. In view of the IG members, defending the religion was the legitimacy for which they fought and the one thing that gave them immunity. Legitimising these acts in this way served as divine justification to members of the group, who were intrinsically fervent in their faith, that they could carry out such bloody strikes in the name of Islam.³⁹⁹

Although some of the acts of individual IG members were based on their interpretation of theoretic Islamic notions, such as *ḥisba* and jihad, many of their operations diverged from their ideological, Sharia-based theorisation because the majority of their actions since then were

³⁹⁵ Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 116.

³⁹⁶ 'Alā' Muḥyī al-Dīn was the IG spokesperson and one of its most active members. Because of his fluency, persuasiveness and wide social relations, he succeeded in communicating the message of the IG to the community and in attracting new recruits. Muḥyī al-Dīn's activities and successes so alarmed the regime that it threatened him of murder if he did not stop his activities. Having ignored the regime's threats, Muḥyī al-Dīn was assassinated by the regime on 2 August 1990. For more details on this, see al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 121-3& 129-31; Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 105-6.

³⁹⁷ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 13.

³⁹⁸ J Toth, "Islamism in Southern Egypt: A Case Study of the Radical Religious Movement," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (35, no. 4 [November 2003]), 561.

³⁹⁹ Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 189; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 13-14.

merely reactions to the abuses and attacks of the establishment against their members.⁴⁰⁰ This was enhanced by the culture of vendetta (*ṭār*) and the prevalence of arms as well as the weak state authority in Upper Egypt, the hometown of most IG members, and the place they had been born and brought up.⁴⁰¹ The majority of militant acts at that time were legitimised through their legitimisation of taking up arms against the regime in a general sense, as stated in IG writings, not necessarily with the permission, or specific instruction from leadership.⁴⁰²

The leaders were imprisoned and, unlike before, communication at that time was no longer attainable due to excessively repressive measures. Thus, the second-in-line commanders and their followers reacted to the governmental raids without specific instructions from the historical leaders. In addition, they launched several violent operations only to pressurise the government to release the imprisoned leaders and members, to allow the IG the freedom of preaching and to remove restrictions on their economic and political activities and resources.⁴⁰³ As they did not gain guidance and instruction from the leaders at that time, the consequence of the IG members' random retaliatory responses to the governmental raids was a number of attacks which highlighted inconsistencies in understanding and of application of the literature that justified these actions, in a general sense.⁴⁰⁴

With continuous raids against IG members, the strict security policy resulted in the killing and arrest of many of the second-in-command leaders of the group by the end of 1992. Some of these leaders escaped imprisonment by fleeing abroad, resulting in three general factions to the group; one that was incarcerated; another that was at liberty (within Egypt) and another that had fled outside Egypt. This inevitably led to difficulties in communication between the three factions and resulted in their acting unilaterally. Any action conducted by any member of any of the three branches would be ascribed by the media to the IG without differentiation. This period saw a lack of guiding leadership, as leaders were isolated inside prisons with no means of communication, explaining the random acts of violence that took place during that period. This situation was further worsened by the IG principle of 'unity' according to which the IG leaders

⁴⁰⁰ Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 94. See also Yūsuf interview in al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 112; Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 607.

⁴⁰¹ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 189.

⁴⁰² Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 187.; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 14-15

⁴⁰³ See e.g., 'Abd al-Mun'im Munib, *Murāj'āt al-Jihādiyyin: Jadāl al-Ḥāḍir wa al-Mustaqbal* (Online MS Word version: downloaded on 11 June 2011. A current PDF version with different pagination is available at: <http://www.ibtesamh.com/showthread-t-434849.html> [accessed on 18 May 2016]), 11.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 15.

and members committed themselves to overcoming any possible disagreements within the Group in order to keep all lines united. Before communication was made unattainable, the leaders' commitment to the principle of unity delayed their objections to the random acts of violence committed by their followers outside prisons though the leaders tried several times to stop acts of violence.⁴⁰⁵

It is claimed that efforts to end the bloodshed and revise the group's ideology were started in the 1980s, immediately after the killing of Sadat.⁴⁰⁶ However, the fact that the IG depended only on *da'wa* and *hisba* in the 1980s was not a reflection of a change in the ideology or of an existing desirability of peaceful change but was acknowledgement of the failure of violence to cause revolution at this stage as proven by Sadat's assassination and subsequent attacks on Asyut. They followed the two means that were available at that time and suspended the third means as they needed to rebuild their lines again to get enough power to successfully and efficiently carry out the third means. In framing terms, they acted according to the available political opportunity structures. The fact that their ideological literature in the 1980s, especially the Charter, argued for violence, means that it was an option that was being prepared to. The rebuilding of the movement and the scripting of the ideological and theoretical legitimisation of violence occurred in the 1980s, after which many brutal attacks were carried out with the leaders' consent.⁴⁰⁷

This being the case, there had been some attempts, by individuals, to stop the brutality since then but these were tactical rather than genuine and were deficient in ideological legitimisation, which reduced these efforts to attempts at a truce, rather than actual reversals of ideology.⁴⁰⁸ Examples of these attempts include the decision of some imprisoned leaders to prevent some actions of forced *hisba* due to their harm, and the attempt of the famous sheikh al-Sha'rāwī and others to mediate between the IG and the government to stop violence. All of these attempts failed for different reasons, including the dominance of the security situation on the ground, the lack of trust between both parties, and media leaks and pressures on the regime to not

⁴⁰⁵ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 15-16; al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 110; Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 135. For a survey of the various attempts of ceasing violence, see al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 148-62.

⁴⁰⁶ See, for example, al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 83.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 16.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 16-17.

negotiate with ‘terrorists’.⁴⁰⁹ Furthermore, attempts to ideologically delegitimise violence during an ongoing conflict are hardly achievable, considering that such an environment is more conducive to negotiating pressing demands rather than supportive religious interpretations, and that militant groups’ leaders are less likely to credibly address the religious legitimacy of the rationale for violence with their followers when an armed struggle is rising.⁴¹⁰

Thus, the 1997 initiative is distinguished from previous efforts to cease violent actions as the latter did not argue against the group’s ideology or render the use of brutal force forbidden. Rather, they were strategic and lacked the ideological legitimisation. Attempts of a temporary truce with the government and other efforts of putting an end to the shedding of blood were justified theoretically by the conciliation that Prophet Muhammad had with his enemies in the Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiya, as a transient strategic resolution.⁴¹¹ This meant that the group’s prior convictions had not been abrogated, as attempts of having a truce with the regime were not a renouncement of the pro-violence ideology but a tactical ceasefire that was not ideologically legitimised. Although these attempts of pacification failed, they did imply that the leaders’ juristic and theological orientations altered slightly after Sadat’s assassination.⁴¹²

Meanwhile, the operations and confrontations of the IG members with the regime not only resulted in the killing and arrest of many of the IG activists but also led to the exposure of the subterranean al-Jihād Organisation. The assassination of the Head of the Egyptian parliament by the IG in 1990 was the first thread that led the government to expose members of al-Jihād Organisation. The detainees confessed, under torture, that they had military training in Afghanistan and spoke about different kinds of weapons and the names of camps and how they used to communicate. They also spoke about the other groups that received training and returned to Egypt. This revealed to the regime the role played by the war in Afghanistan and how serious Islamist groups had become.⁴¹³ As a result, around 1000 of the al-Jihād trained members were arrested and subjected to military trials in early 1993 in the case known as *Ṭalā’i’ al-Fath* (Vanguards of the Conquest).⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁹ Munīb, *Murāj’āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 11.

⁴¹⁰ Drevon, “Assessing Islamist De-radicalization,” 298-9.

⁴¹¹ *Taqrīr al-Ḥāla al-Dīniyya fī Miṣr*, qtd. in al-Manāwī, *Shāhid ‘alā Waqf al-’Unf*, 78.

⁴¹² Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 16-17.

⁴¹³ For a detailed description of this operation and its impact, see Mūrū, *Tanzīm al-Jihād*, 279-322.

⁴¹⁴ Mubārak, *Al-Irḥābiyyūn Qādimūn*, 410; Al-Sibā’ī, “Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyīn ilā Afghānistān.”

Those arrested in the ‘Vanguard of the Conquest’ case belonged to different places and different Jihadi groups but they had one thing in common. When they were asked about the names of those who received them in Afghanistan, they mentioned three names ending with al-Ḥawāhirī. Thus all of them came to know that they all belonged to the same mother organisation led by al-Ḥawāhirī without knowing about one another. They did not mention Faḍl’s name because they did not know that he was the emir as he was not involved in any paramilitary action.⁴¹⁵

The arrest of this large number infuriated other members abroad who felt ashamed as their fellows were arrested without any resistance or retaliatory action. In their view, the arrest was shameful because their counterparts in the IG were conducting several operations to release their imprisoned members while they did nothing and were further arrested without shooting a single bullet. They also accused the leadership of inefficiency and negligence and pressed for punishing the leaders held responsible for this large-scale arrest. This ended up with a dissident group that challenged al-Ḥawāhirī’s policies and wanted to take immediate violent action. As the war in Afghanistan had finished by that time, most of al-Jihād members outside Egypt had travelled to Yemen and then to Sudan as the Sudanese regime sponsored Islamists and encouraged them to move to Sudan. However, Faḍl stayed in Pakistan and when he was asked to travel to Sudan to solve the problem of Jihadi dissent, he refused and resigned, and al-Ḥawāhirī took office after consultation with the Organisation’s Consultative Council.⁴¹⁶

Shortly afterwards and in the same year of 1993, another dispute occurred between Faḍl and other leaders of the Organisation because of Faḍl’s book *Al-Jāmi’ fī Ṭalab al-‘Ilm al-Sharīf* which he completed in 1993. The book greatly widened the scope of *takfīr* and criticised most of the Islamist movements, including the IG and branches of al-Jihād. The views in the book, particularly those on *takfīr*, were considered too radical even by al-Ḥawāhirī and other Islamists. Therefore, al-Ḥawāhirī and al-Jihād figures altered some of the views in Faḍl’s book and removed the critique of Islamist movements and reprinted the book under a different name. This further increased Faḍl’s fury with al-Ḥawāhirī and al-Jihād and marked a total separation between the two. Faḍl, who by that time had moved to Yemen, considered his knowledge and effort greater than the ability of the Organisation to revise them and reacted by issuing a second edition of the book with an announcement in the introduction where he launched a fierce attack at his

⁴¹⁵ Al-Sibā’ī, “Intiqāl al-Islāmiyyīn ilā Afghānistān.”

⁴¹⁶ Al-Sibā’ī, “Intiqāl Imārat al-Jihād min Sayyid Imām ilā al-Ḥawāhirī;” Al-Khaṭīb, “Riḥla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl.”

previous Organisation, describing it with extremely coarse descriptions and a declaring his non-affiliation to any jihadi movement.⁴¹⁷

Faḍl's criticism of Islamists and attack on his own organisation al-Jihād shows the nature of Faḍl's relationship with his Organisation in particular and other Jihadists in general at that particular time. The level of fury shown in this announcement goes well beyond any expected reaction to the mere act of abridging and retitling a book without its author's permission. The announcement seemed to be the final word in Faḍl's relationship with al-Jihād Organisation and other Islamist movement.

After Faḍl's resignation and abandonment of jihadi work, al-Jihād Organisation split into two groups: the old guard led by al-Ḍawāhirī and the new guard that favored guerrilla clashes with the regime. Then al-Jihād members, with al-Ḍawāhirī's reluctant approval, conducted two attempts on the life of the Egyptian Prime Minister ʿĀṭif Sidqī and Minister of Interior Ḥasan al-Alfī in retaliation to the arrest of their fellows. Not only did the operations fail but also the Egyptian authorities escalated its campaign against the organisation, which resulted in the arrest and killing of more members and confiscation of many properties and financial assets. In addition, a crisis started in the relationship between the Sudanese intelligence and the Organisation that culminated in firing the Organisation from Sudan,⁴¹⁸ which deprived the organisation from the material resources and support they used to get from the Sudanese government. This exhausted all the resources of the Organisation, which forced al-Ḍawāhirī in 1995 to declare a cease of violent operations within Egypt due to lack of capacity.⁴¹⁹

The splits between al-Jihād groups and the consequent practical end of their activities inside Egypt as declared later by al-Ḍawāhirī in 1995 confirm the framing principle that frame resonance is affected by the perceived credibility of the frame articulators (leaders).⁴²⁰ Here, failure to cause any harm to the regime and the arrest of this big number of activists cast doubts on the executive and managerial, but not necessarily the religious and theological, credibility of

⁴¹⁷ Al-Khaṭīb, "Rihla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl." See the critique and the story in the introduction of Faḍl's *al-Jāmi'*, 9-11.

⁴¹⁸ Hānī Al-Sibā'ī, "Hānī al-Sibā'ī Yarwī Qiṣṣat al-Ikhtirāq al-Ladhī Ta'rraḍat Lahu Jamāat al-Jihād fī al-Khurṭūm," *Al-Ḥayāt Newspaper* (4 September 2002), 10; Ayman al-Ḍawāhirī, "Al-Hijra ilā Afghānistān wa al-Taḥawwul li Istihdāf al-Maṣālīḥ al-Amrīkiyya: Al-Sharq al-Awṣaṭ Tanshur Kitāb Al-Ḍawāhirī aw al-Waṣiyya al-Akhīra," *Al-Sharq al-Awṣaṭ Newspaper* (2 December 2002), 10.

⁴¹⁹ Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 117; Al-Sibā'ī, "Qiṣṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād."

⁴²⁰ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 203; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 621; Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 16.

the leaders, which resulted in splits. This was not the case with the IG at that time as the IG activists were launching successful attacks and the leaders could not be blamed for any failure due to their imprisonment.

Thus, the above demonstration shows that in the first half of the 1990s the governmental iron-fisted measures against the IG and al-Jihād became stricter and the regime took the lead in attacking Islamists. Moreover, 'terrorism' cases were considered only through military justice to ensure severer sentences. The government then adopted a policy on detention whereby suspects were arrested on suspicion alone, resulting in wide-scale arrests. Detainees were remanded without trial or any idea as to the length of their sentencing. Communication of such offenders was restricted within corrective facilities so that members of the group could not communicate with one another. Acts of repression were carried out that included beating and other acts that deliberately caused injury to inmates. As a result, several inmates died. The families of those incarcerated under such policy were also made to suffer, with the government targeting them with social and economic discrimination.⁴²¹

Besides, the government was successful in stopping foreign donations reaching the Islamists. Also, Sudan's and Iran's policies, which used to support revolution, were altered due to their international isolation.⁴²² According to official reports, during 1992-1995, 471 Islamists were killed and around 30,000 were detained. This period also featured extra-judicial killings, mass-murders, systematic torture in prisons, military show-trials and regular curfews in Upper Egypt. Therefore, by 1997 almost all of the IG's activities came to an end, as those sympathetic to their cause within Egypt, save those staying in hideouts, had been arrested or killed.⁴²³ As a result of these strict governmental policies and extremely repressive measures,⁴²⁴ the political opportunity structures of the two groups were disabled, which constrained collective action of the IG and al-Jihād who were unable to launch attacks by 1995 as conflict with the government had led to the regime putting an end to members' activities outside prison. This was confirmed

⁴²¹ Examples of this include governmental harassment, detention and deprivation from employment. This was confirmed by Mamdūh Yūsuf, an IG activist, in an interview in Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 145. See also Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 621; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 17; Rashwan, "Renunciation of Violence," 124.

⁴²² The IG used to receive some funds from its leaders abroad and from some figures in Afghanistan and Pakistan. See Ashour, "A World without Jihad," 117.

⁴²³ Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 180; Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 612; Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 133-4.

⁴²⁴ For an extended discussion of the indiscriminate repression of Islamists during this period and its impact on the IG decision to stop violence, see Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 209-13.

by al-Ṣawāhirī's declaration of 1995 on the halting of all operations inside Egypt due to the lack of capacity and the great losses they had experienced.⁴²⁵

Despite the fact that the Islamists viewed rebellion as the most viable method of resistance to oppression and suffering, the Islamists, robbed of public sympathy and the requisite backing, were not in a position to have a drawn out confrontation with the Egyptian regime. Instead of seeking this support and building bridges, Islamists engaged in a 'hasty and short-sighted' military confrontation with a powerful regime, failing to appreciate the strength of the forces they were going up against. In other words, they had lost touch with reality, feeling empowered and arrogant.⁴²⁶

Al-Jihād Dissolution and Coalition with al-Qaeda and the IG Revisions (1997-2004)

By 1995, the regime's iron fist managed to practically stop violence. As a result, the IG members remained helpless in prison, hideouts or abroad and al-Jihād members abroad looked for a country to host them after their expulsion from Sudan. So, al-Ṣawāhirī and his fellows went back to Afghanistan in early 1996 and built strong relations with Usāma Bin Lādin that culminated in their unity and the declaration of the establishment of al-Qaeda in 1998. According to al-Sibā'ī, this was a unilateral decision from al-Ṣawāhirī and some of the Organisation's *Shūrā* Council members while most of the other members did not know about it except after the declaration, which created more disagreements inside the Organisation.⁴²⁷

Al-Ṣawāhirī and his fellows joined al-Qaeda under the influence of great financial and security pressures as their expulsion from Sudan meant a loss of both their secure haven and the financial support they got from the Sudanese government. However, other members viewed that the Organisation was changing its ideology of focusing on Egypt and the Egyptian affair only. They argued that the focus of struggle should not be widened as this would be catastrophic to the Organisation. The Organisation's view was that fighting the near enemy (i.e. the local 'apostate' regimes) should be given priority over fighting the far enemy (international 'infidel' regimes). This is based on their belief that the punishment of the 'apostates' is graver than that of the 'original disbelievers' who were neither born Muslims nor accepted Islam at any time. Thus, they had the view that fighting the apostate local regimes is of the highest priority as

⁴²⁵ Al-Sibā'ī, "Qisṣat Ta'sīs al-Jihād," 3. See also Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 17-18.

⁴²⁶ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 18; Gerges, "The End of Islamist Insurgency," 593.

⁴²⁷ Al-Sibā'ī, "Qisṣat al-Ikhtirāq."

they were the ones who brought occupiers to Muslim lands. This is contradictory to the ideology of al-Qaeda which believes that fighting Western powers is more important than fighting the local 'apostate regimes'.⁴²⁸

Thus, by that time, al-Jihād organisation split into several groups: some joined Bin lādin and some adhered to their early beliefs but without further activities, while the majority was in prison. This remained the case until the American invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 which increased the dissipation of the remaining members of the Organisation which no longer existed except in Egyptian prisons and some mountain areas on the Pakistani-Afghani borders.⁴²⁹ Regarding Faḍl, he moved to Yemen after he cut relations with al-Jihād and he continued to live and work there until he was detained by the Yemeni authorities under pressures from the US after 9/11 attacks. He was kept in Yemeni jails for 29 months before he was extradited to Egypt by the end of February 2004 to serve a life sentence in the case known as 'The returnees from Albania' (*Al-ʿĀidūn min Albāniya*) despite the fact that he never travelled to Albania.⁴³⁰

Though different in ideology and course of action, the IG and al-Jihād prisoners inside Egypt went through the same structural strains and the same excessively repressive conditions. However, the IG leaders, due to the Group's solidarity and unified leadership, tried to quickly put an end to these miserable conditions. Having resulted in bloodshed and civilian casualties, the operations of the two groups deprived them from the Egyptian masses' sympathy and added legitimacy to the repressive actions taken by the regime against them.⁴³¹ This public alienation of the two groups, together with counter framing by al-Azhar and media, featured the loss of the cultural opportunity and the cultural context the two groups had before, which constrained their collective action framing.⁴³²

An understanding of the cultural context or the 'social milieu' within which Islamist groups operate is essential to understand their decisions to undertake or renounce violence. This context or social milieu refers to public opinion, prevailing norms about the adequacy, legitimacy or effectiveness of violent or non-violent tactics, and also public condemnation,

⁴²⁸ Al-Zawāhirī, "Al-Hijra ilā Afghānistān," 10.

⁴²⁹ Al-Sibāʿī, "Qiṣṣat al-Ikhtirāq."

⁴³⁰ Al-Khaṭīb, "Rihla Ṭawīla li al-Duktūr Faḍl;" Al-Sharīf, "Ismāʿīl Najl al-Duktūr Faḍl."

⁴³¹ Al-Manāwī, *Shāhid 'alā Waqf al-'Unf*, 43.

⁴³² Framing researches emphasise that the cultural context in which movement activity is embedded can facilitate or constrain movement framing activities in the same way the political opportunity structure does. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 629.

acceptance or toleration of a particular group. Strong public condemnation of violent attacks and of the groups launching such attacks exercises powerful pressure on mass-based groups like the IG. This pressure is particularly acute for leaders, who, when faced with strong public condemnation and organisational crisis, are forced to rethink the mission of the group and to push for reform.⁴³³

Thus, the loss of the 'cultural context' and the support of the 'social milieu' affected the two organisations and their targeted audience, which in turn affected the framing and message of the two groups. Likewise, it has been established in communication studies and framing literature that the target of the message can affect the form and content of the message, and that the audience targeted is one of the major contextual factors that help explain why movements seek to modify their collective action frames from time to time.⁴³⁴ Thus, in addition to the above explained changes in the political opportunity and structural conditions, the loss of public support as a result of unwarranted bloodshed and the random operations of violence led to the loss of not only the cultural context but also the targeted audience. This is confirmed by research that emphasises that public norms of resistance affect the likelihood of movement's use or renunciation of violence. If the regime is widely perceived as illegitimate and violent resistance is widely accepted, the adoption of violent tactics does not alienate a group from the society and thus becomes an effective option. On the other hand, if public norms of resistance change and the public strongly condemn violence, violence would be of a much higher cost to the organisation and thus a decision of revisions or de-escalation would be more likely.⁴³⁵

Thus, the loss of political opportunity, the support of the cultural context and audience, as well as the change of public norms of resistance raised the leaders' consciousness such that they recognised their followers' practices had deviated from the Sharia, and that the situation would get progressively worse and a further violent act would result only in more repression, detention, spilling of blood and sins that the leaders and the followers would accrue. This, together with their military and spiritual defeat, drove them to think of solutions.⁴³⁶ Thus, changes in the cultural, material and structural conditions led to changes in frame resonance, which in turn led to reframing.

⁴³³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 386.

⁴³⁴ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 630.

⁴³⁵ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 74-5.

⁴³⁶ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 18-19.

Moreover, the ideology of violent movements had resonance in Egypt due to the lack of moderate authoritative religious guidance or direction (as could be attained from the scholars of al-Azhar), and the feeble presence of the moderate Islamic movements such as the MB in Upper Egypt, also gave radical ideologies and thoughts the opportunity to take the lead. The vacuum of moderate Islamic guidance was filled by ideologies that were essentially alien to Egyptian society, a society that had never witnessed such systematic jihadist and *takfirī* trends before.⁴³⁷ In the 1990s, this vacuum was broadly filled by the governmental religious establishment (al-Azhar), at a time when the regime launched theocratic warfare against Jihadists to appeal to the hearts and minds of the masses, through the media and the governmental religious institution.⁴³⁸ In addition, in 1993 there were efforts of reconciliation led by prominent sheikhs like Muḥammad al-Ghazālī and Muḥammad Mitwallī al-Sha'rāwī to counsel on and discuss religious justifications of violence with the IG leaders, which, though unsuccessful, gradually influenced the orientations of the leaders.⁴³⁹

Furthermore, Al-Azhar scholars wrote numerous works in refutation of the Salafi Jihadist ideology,⁴⁴⁰ and the government gave the imprisoned leaders access to books of Jurisprudence and writings of mainstream Muslim scholars. Coupled with practical factors, access to mainstream religious texts made it possible for the IG leadership to rethink their previous understanding of the Sharia and put the teachings of their oft-quoted Islamic ideologues in a more nuanced, contextualised and historical context. According to a former IG member, the leadership changed its views after first studying simple and then more complex Islamic texts.⁴⁴¹ This exposure to books of mainstream Muslim scholars and intellectuals enhanced the political learning and religious capability of the leaders and drove them to view the issue from a wider angle.

Thus, the Egyptian jihadist movement faced a dilemma after the relentless confrontations with the regime. They discovered that the regime made fighting against them its first priority, and

⁴³⁷ This is confirmed by the testimony of Islamists themselves. For example, Maḥmūd Shu'ayb, one of the IG affiliates, states, "When we were young, al-Azhar sheikhs were distant from us... At that time, I suddenly found in the mosque one of the IG members who took interest in me, and even took an interest in my personal problems. So I became emotionally dependent on that man." Maḥmūd Shu'ayb, interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 132. See also Stein, "Uncivil Partnership," 871.

⁴³⁸ Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 298; Carmon et al, "The Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya."

⁴³⁹ See al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 152; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 23-4.

⁴⁴⁰ An example of this is the book titled " *Naqḍ al-Farīda al-Ghā'iba*" by the Al-Azhar Grand Imam Jād al Ḥaqq and the Azharite sheikh 'Aṭiyya Saqr. See Jād al-Ḥaqq 'Alī Jād al-Ḥaqq and 'Aṭiyya Saqr, *Naqḍ al-Farīda al-Ghā'iba* (Cairo: Majallat al-Azhar, 1414 A.H).

⁴⁴¹ Interview with an IG member quoted in Blaydes and Rubin, "Ideological Reorientation," 469.

they also recognised that were undergoing a vicious circle of violence and counter violence, which proved to be useless and destructive. This also seemed to them contradictory to the moral code they, especially the IG, have committed themselves to as their main job shifted from moral religious upbringing and righteousness to bloodshed and violence. They also recognised they were drawn to the use of force that was not governed by Islamic manners, piety and self-discipline, and thus proved counterproductive.⁴⁴² Having recognised that changing the 'un-Islamic reality' by force would be impossible and having suffered a comprehensive military and spiritual defeat, the IG leaders attempted to change this dire situation. As a result, they began to question their thought and thought of changing their attitudes , which marked the birth of non-violence initiative in July 1997.⁴⁴³

The media and the government met this declaration with suspicion and surprise, a suspicion that increased a few months later in November 1997, when some IG members carried out a bloody operation at Luxor, resulting in tens of casualties. The IG leaders claimed that the massacre had taken place due to a lack of communication. They maintained that it had been carried out by some members of the group who were in hiding so had not heard of the (peace) initiative and had carried it out fulfilling orders that had been given some years before the initiative.⁴⁴⁴ This was the last, but most fatal, act of violence committed by the IG members, and was strongly condemned by the former leaders and those head who were abroad.⁴⁴⁵

The decision to make the initiative was taken by the imprisoned historical leaders without consultation with or approval from the leaders abroad who firstly showed refusal as they thought the imprisoned leaders were forced to declare this initiative. So, initially there was no consensus between IG members and the second-in-line leaders abroad. Yet, the leaders abroad were convinced of the importance of ceasing violence after the authorities allowed the imprisoned leaders to have extensive communication and debates with the leaders abroad. This

⁴⁴² Ḥabīb, *Taḥawwulāt al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiyya*, 79.

⁴⁴³ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 19.

⁴⁴⁴ Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Tanfarid bi Awwal Ḥiwār Ṣaḥāfī ma'a Duḵtūr Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm Mufakkir al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Newspaper* (14 August 2006), 1.

⁴⁴⁵ Karam Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt* (Cairo: Maktabat al-'Ubaykān, 2005), 112; Usāma Rushdī, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya wa Khurūjuhā min Mu'askar Ḥarakāt al-'Unf fī Miṣr," Interview by Mālik al-Tirīk, *Qaḍāya al-Sā'a*, *Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel*: <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/94427CB3-88F5-4789-83F9-DD08C89611D8.htm> (last accessed 24 November 2015); Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 20-1.

culminated in a statement issued by the IG leaders abroad, on 28 March 1999, in which they declared their support of the non-violence initiative.⁴⁴⁶

This featured a new stage for the initiative as the regime started to take it seriously, which facilitated the start of the process of discursive ideological legitimisation of the new thought. The regime allowed the imprisoned historical leaders to tour prisons and conduct teaching and debate sessions with the second-in-line commanders and other members to convince them of the new thought. After 9/11 attacks, the Egyptian regime took a further step forward and extensive media coverage was given to the IG to air their new views. They also helped by disseminating their new literature. The Egyptian regime wanted to send the message to the Western Powers that it was successful in neutralising 'terror'. It removed thousands of potential supporters and affiliates of al-Qaeda from its camp, and as a result should not be held to account for its repressive measures and human rights abuses.⁴⁴⁷

In order to disseminate the new thought and provide evidence that their initiative is based on a genuine paradigm shift and not a tactic, leaders of the IG issued a series of works that documented their renewed ideology, religious discourse and proofs. These books came under a series titled *Silsilat Taṣḥīḥ al-Mafāhīm* (A Series of Correcting the Concepts), a title which indicates that previous understandings were incorrect and are now being rectified. This is an implicit declaration that the basis upon which their legitimacy rested (their understanding of Islam) was misunderstood and misinterpreted.⁴⁴⁸

These books present counterarguments and reframing of the ideology they had previously subscribed to, using Islamic juristic principles. The new literature centres upon the notion that the evils of violence are greater than the benefits it brings about. They also maintain that previous actions of violence have no connection with jihad in its correct sense or Islam in its truest sense. Violence cannot guide people to the straight path but impacts negatively upon the Ummah's unity, weakens Egypt and demeans its ability to face challenges. Furthermore, it tarnishes the image of Islam and violates the lives of innocents who were victims of a struggle that turned out to be against the spirit of the Sharia.⁴⁴⁹ The government's adoption of the initiative and the release of the first four books that argue against violence marked the third

⁴⁴⁶ Munib, *Murāj'āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 19; Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 613; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 21.

⁴⁴⁷ Ashour, "Lions Tamed," 623; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 22.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 24.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 24.

stage of revisions which was publicised in January 2002 when the ideological content of the IG revisions was first released to media.

As the literature that propagated violence was produced under the auspices of the old leaders, countering the works they had previously promoted and convincing members that the old ideology was mistaken would be more likely to succeed only if undertaken by the same leaders. In addition to the ultimate respect and veneration from the followers to the leaders, those leaders are, beyond suspicion in the eyes of their followers, as they are the only credible authority in any such arguments who would not yield to any pressures to change their genuine convictions. Sources outside these were not deemed credible and dismissed as being agents of the regime who had been co-opted or weakened by torture and repression.⁴⁵⁰ This confirms the importance of effective and credible leadership in any process of transformation or ideological de-legitimisation of violence. Thus, the IG and similar ex-jihadist revisionists could be much more effective in reaching or reorienting potential or already-existing jihadists than any other religious establishment or figure.⁴⁵¹

Al-Jihād Revisions, Jihadi Polemics and New Phases in the IG Revisions (2004- present)

Though some of al-Jihād members joined the IG revisions and though they experienced the same prison conditions as those of the IG members, decentralism and the lack of unified highly respectable leadership delayed the revisions of al-Jihād. By the summer of 2004, there started a process of revisions led by Nabīl Naʿīm, leader of one of the Jihadi faction in Egyptian prisons. Naʿīm and his group, further motivated by the success of the IG revisions, succeeded in attracting some other factions. However, due to the severe factionalism and decentralisation of the different jihadi groups and the weak religious and charismatic credentials of Naʿīm, the

⁴⁵⁰ This was confirmed by Munīb who was an eyewitness on what happened inside prison. See Munīb, *Murājʾāt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 29-30; Ashour, "A world without Jihad," 198; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 22. Having been asked about the effect of the leaders on his acceptance of the initiative, Mamdūh Yūsuf, one of the IG activists, answered, "We have accepted the arguments they presented because we know their history. These arguments may be presented by al-Azhar or by the Salafis but we will not accept them. We are convinced with them because they are presented by them (the leaders) as there is no suspicion of liaison with the security apparatuses." See Mamdūh Yūsuf interview in al-ʿAwwā, *Al-Jamāʿa al-Islāmiyya*, 206.

⁴⁵¹ Jackson, "Beyond Jihad," 67.

attempt failed and several factions refused them. This remained the case until Faḍl took the lead in late 2006.⁴⁵²

Because of Faḍl's outstanding theological credibility and the ultimate respect and authority he has in the jihadi ranks, it was only him who could unite these groups. This supports framing researchers' emphasis that the higher the status and perceived knowledge and expertise of the frame articulator in the sight of members and potential adherents, the more credible and resonant the framings or claims they present.⁴⁵³ It also shows that the credibility of frame articulators is vital for the acceptance of a group's message, and that leaders with a good enough reputation can elicit trust and enhance prospects for successful message dissemination. Therefore, the credibility of the messenger or frame articulator is a necessary precondition for frame alignment.⁴⁵⁴

Thus, Faḍl was the right figure to lead the different Jihadi groups due to his unrivalled theological knowledge, status and credibility. Faḍl toured prisons to convince different jihadi factions of a non-violence initiative similar to that of the IG. This took several months and ended by the approval of the majority of al-Jihad leaders and members who signed and approved his new theological arguments.⁴⁵⁵ Faḍl's revisions were published in a series of 15 articles in the Egyptian *al-Maṣrī al-Yūm* and the Kuwaiti *al-Jarīdā* newspapers, as of 18 November 2007. The Egyptian authorities encouraged and facilitated the whole process but preferred to keep its role unpublicised.⁴⁵⁶

Faḍl's book was titled "*Wathīqat Tarshīd Al-'Amal al-Jihādī fī Miṣr wa al-'Ālam*" (Correct Guidance for Jihadi Operations in Egypt and the World Over). It included concentrated theological arguments about the jihadi issues, especially rebellion against rulers and attacking non-Muslims, tourists and western targets. Faḍl's *Wathīqa* spoke only about theological aspects of the issues pertaining to violence and concluded with delegitimising them without speaking

⁴⁵² Muntaṣir al-Zayyāt, "Al-Khurūj 'alā al-Mujtama'āt wa al-'Awda llayhā [1-2]," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Newspaper*: <http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=84554> (Downloaded 27 December 2010); Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, "Qīṣṣat Murāja'āt al-Jihād," *Al-Maṣrī al-Yūm Newspaper*: <http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=83478> (Downloaded 27 December 2010).

⁴⁵³ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 621.

⁴⁵⁴ Wiktorowicz, "Framing Jihad," 163-4.

⁴⁵⁵ See, for instance, Ṣāliḥ Jāhīn, "Interview with Ṣāliḥ Jāhīn," *Al-Jarīda Newspaper* (2 December 2007), 12.

⁴⁵⁶ Al-Zayyāt, "Al-Khurūj 'alā al-Mujtama'āt;" Al-Khaṭīb, "Qīṣṣat Murāja'āt al-Jihād."

about other socio-political aspects. A few days later, Faḍl revealed some of the socio-political background of the revisions in a long interview with the London-based *al-Ḥayāt* Newspaper.

While Faḍl's revisions as published in the *Wathīqa* stayed still without developing further arguments or commenting on other communal issues, the revisions of the IG went two stages further. After the three stages of the IG revisions mentioned above, the fourth stage began in 2005 when the IG leaders started publishing books to comment on current occurrences or incidents in and outside Egypt such as the bombings of Riyadh and Casablanca, and the operations and ideology of al-Qaeda. This stage also marked the Launch of the IG website⁴⁵⁷ and the publication of several detailed books about issues related to the jihadi movements and concepts used for justifying political violence such as the concepts of sovereignty and *Takfīr*. Although Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm is the leader who has written the majority of the IG revisions, the rest of the group's leaders have had input in the process; writing part of the of it and/or revising and approving all of what Ibrāhīm had put forward.⁴⁵⁸ A fifth stage started after the Arab spring when the IG became politically active, launched its political party 'Al-Binā' wa al-Tanmiya' (Construction and Development) and introduced candidates for the Egyptian parliamentary elections, declaring a new political phase in the history of the Group.⁴⁵⁹

Having clarified the context and causation of violence and revisions above, it would be more fruitful to discuss the sincerity and genuineness of the revisions before analysing their contents, a task that is undertaken in the following section.

Were the Revisions Written under Duress?

A sound revision of one's ideology should be in essence a reflection of freedom in thought and actions and, therefore, should emanate from an environment that is not dominated by fear,

⁴⁵⁷ A few years after the activation of the non-violence initiative, the government allowed the IG to start its website (<http://www.eigportal.com>) to publicise their new stances and make peaceful preaching of Islam.

⁴⁵⁸ Therefore, any reference to any of the IG publications or arguments will be ascribed to the IG leaders in general. See Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 21.

⁴⁵⁹ Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 303. Also some members of al-Jihād established a political party following the overthrow of the Mubarak regime. For more on the two political parties, see Jérôme Drevon, "The Emergence of Ex-Jihadi Political Parties in Post-Mubarak Egypt," *The Middle East Journal* (69, no. 4 [2015]), 511-526. The article investigates the two groups' organisational dynamics and internal dialogues in order to uncover the rationale of their political participation after the January 2011 uprising and its internal ideational legitimisation. It argues that both groups embraced nonviolent participation in democratic politics through an internal reassessment of the political opportunities offered to them by Egypt's brief political opening.

detention, torture or violation of human rights and dignity. As the revisions were primarily produced in prison under strict security measures and with encouragement from the official political and security forces, they seemed to be justificatory reconcilatory theological thought aimed at achieving some social and political gains through reconciliation with the security forces and ending the imprisonment and torture of the detainees. Though this does not necessarily mean that the revisions are not genuine, it does represent an unsound environment for any process of revisions or reform in the thoughts that, in order to be a fruitful and productive, needs an atmosphere of religious, intellectual and political freedom and tolerance that allows free unrestricted argumentations, debates and exchange of different views between various and perhaps opposing religious and cultural contributors.⁴⁶⁰ Nonetheless, the below review will show different views on whether the revisions were genuine or a product of torture and pressure, starting with the IG.

The IG

Unlike Faḍl's revisions, the practical attitudes of the IG leaders and members, together with the depth and scope of their anti-violence literature, dissipated the fears of suspicious analysts that the IG revisions might not be genuine or that they could be tactical or written under the influence of pressures or as a deal. Though there was a lot of suspicion and skepticism at the beginning of the revisions, all the fears and suspicion dissipated after the IG published its massive literature and confirmed their ideological stances with their practical attitudes. The general view became that someone under pressure would not produce thousands of pages and hundreds of interviews and articles to assert and reemphasise the mistakes of the past and establish a new set of beliefs that are confirmed with their practical actions.

In addition, according to 'Abd al-Mun'im Munīb who shared the same prison with the IG leaders at the time of the initiative, it was Karam Zuhdī who voluntarily suggested opening a dialogue with the government and launched the initiative. Munīb concludes that what he saw inside prison was that the revisions and the initiative before them were launched by the free will and choice of some important leaders and members who then convinced other leaders and members.⁴⁶¹ Furthermore, if there was any kind of pressure in prison on the imprisoned leaders,

⁴⁶⁰ 'Abd al-Fattāh, "Al-Khiṭāb al-Islāmī," 106.

⁴⁶¹ Munīb, *Murāj'āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 4& 11.

there was no such pressure on the leaders abroad who were free to accept or reject. Yet, the leaders abroad unanimously approved the revisions in 1999 though they initially opposed them and claimed that they were the product of pressure.

The fact that the government cooperated with the initiative only after two years of its launch proves that the revisions were genuine and represent the personal convictions of the leaders. The fact that the government later helped the IG spread their new ideas and receive extensive media does not mean that the initiative was made under pressure or as a deal but means that the regime found them genuine and beneficial and thus decided to sponsor them to put a peaceful end to one of the bloodiest struggles in Egypt's modern history.

This became particularly clearer after the collapse of the Mubarak regime as the IG explanations and approach in the revisions remained unchanged and the IG played a political role and formed a new political party that aims for political change through peaceful means.

After the July 2013 coup and the subsequent extremely repressive policies of the government against Islamists, the IG remained peaceful. It challenged the coup only through universally accepted peaceful means of protest such as demonstrations, sit-ins and rallies. When some of the rallies were stormed by police and army forces, resulting in several massacres, the IG reacted by calling for more rallies and demonstrations, and completely shunned political violence.⁴⁶²

AL-Jihād

Unlike those of the IG, Faḍl's revisions did not receive the same level of approval. They have provoked several supporting, suspicious, cautious and opposing reactions. Because of the weight of Faḍl in the jihadi circles, al-Ṣawāhirī criticised his revisions harshly even before they were published and later on published a lengthy book titled *al-Tabri'a* (the Exoneration) criticising Faḍl's revisions in detail, but Faḍl answered back in a furious polemic called *al-Ta'riya li Kitāb al-Tabri'a* (Uncovering the Book of *al-Tabria*). Also, several other jihadists responded to Faḍl and his fellows accusing them of yielding to governmental pressures and forsaking their beliefs. Faḍl also answered back.

⁴⁶² Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 187.

Such polemics and challenges to Faḍl and the IG new stances are known in framing literature as opponent ‘counter-framing’. This refers to the contestants’ opposition to the changes advocated by a movement or a person by publicly challenging the movement’s diagnostic and prognostic framings, in an attempt to neutralise, disprove or undermine the opponent’s interpretive framework or versions of reality.⁴⁶³ The IG and Faḍl’s replies to these challenges (as in Faḍl’s *al-Ta’riya* and the IG in their criticism of al-Qaeda) constitute a reframing activity that attempts to neutralise, contain, reduce or reverse potential damage to the group’s previous claims or frames.⁴⁶⁴ Such polemics between movements and their detractors have been referred to as ‘framing contests’, which can also occur internally.⁴⁶⁵ A broader discussion of this extensive jihadi debates and polemics is given below.

Jihadi Polemics and Accusations of Duress

As will be explained later, al-Jihād revisions, unlike those of the IG, have several limitations and are of controversial nature, and it is they who provoked most of the polemics and challenges. Therefore, they need extended discussion to establish whether they were written under pressure or were the product of genuine convictions. Generally speaking, opinion is divided in two as to whether Faḍl’s *Wathīqa* was written under coercion of the Egyptian regime:⁴⁶⁶

1- Coercion

Members and supporters of al-Qaeda put forward the argument that the *Wathīqa* was written as a result of torture and coercion at the hands of the Egyptian authorities, and a promise of release, or more favourable conditions in prison. This being the case, they say that a captive’s statement or action cannot be accepted.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶³ Robert Benford, “Framing Activity, Meaning, and Social Movement Participation: The Nuclear Disarmament Movement,” (PhD dissertation, University of Texas, 1987), 75.

⁴⁶⁴ R Benford & S Hunt, “Social Movement Counterframing and Reframing: Repairing and Sustaining Collective Identity Claims,” A paper Presented at *Midwest Sociology Conference* (St. Louis, [1994]) qtd. In Benford and Snow, “Framing processes,” 626.

⁴⁶⁵ Benford and Snow, “Framing processes,” 626.

⁴⁶⁶ Most of the information in this section is based on Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 22-5.

⁴⁶⁷ See, for example, Hānī al-Sibā’ī, “Ḥiwār Jarīdat al-Dustūr ma’a al-Shīkh al-Duktūr Hānī al-Sibā’ī,” interviewed by Khalid Maḥmūd, *Al-Dustūr Newspaper* (5 December 2007)) republished on al-Maqreezi website: http://www.almagreze.net/ar/articles_read.php?article_id=227 (19 October 2011); Al-’Alwānī, “Al-’Alwānī fī Ḥiwārih ma’a Islamonline.net,” 2; Al-Jarīda, “Al-Ḍawāḥirī Hajama Shaykhah;” MEMRI, “Major Jihadi Cleric and Author of Al-Qaeda’s Shari’a Guide to Jihad Sayyed Imam vs. Al-Qaeda (2): Al-Ḍawāḥirī Was Sudanese Agent – Sudan’s VP Ali Othman Taha Hired Him to Attack Egypt; Ban on Jihad against Egyptian Regime in Egypt; Summary of Imam’s New

In *al-Tabri'a*, al-Ṣawāḥirī launched a fierce attack against Faḍl trying to prove with all possible means that he wrote the *Wathīqa* under pressure.⁴⁶⁸ Al-Ṣawāḥirī's serious efforts to neutralise the *Wathīqa* under the assumption that it was the product of torture and coercion made him go as far as requesting others not to accept a word from anybody even himself if they are taken prisoners and later change their arguments while imprisoned.⁴⁶⁹ Similar arguments were made by other Jihadists like Muḥammad al-Ḥakayma,⁴⁷⁰ jihadi sympathisers like Ḥānī al-Sibā'ī⁴⁷¹ and non-Jihadists like Maḥfūẓ 'Azzām.⁴⁷²

2- Genuine Revisions

That Faḍl's revisions are genuine convictions and not the product of pressure is the view of the majority, including Faḍl himself, members of the IG, affiliates of al-Jihād Organisation who accepted the *Wathīqa*, as well as most of the journalists and observers.⁴⁷³ As the revisions of the IG have proven genuineness and the view that they were written as a deal with the authorities or under pressure have turned out to be mistaken; this influenced the observers' reactions towards the revisions of Faḍl. Examples of the supporters of this view include the analyst Jamāl al-Bannā⁴⁷⁴, ex-member of al-Jihād Aḥmad Ḥamdallah⁴⁷⁵ and some websites concerned with analysis of Jihadist positions like Political Islam Online.⁴⁷⁶ The Jihadist ideologue Abū Basīr al-Ṭarṭūsī noted that he believed that the revisions are not written under duress because a coerced person will write only one or two pages to rid himself of coercion. However, Faḍl wrote a

Right Guidance for Jihad Book," Memri (no. 1826): <http://www.memrijttm.org/content/en/report.htm?report=2636¶m=AJT> (14 October 2011).

⁴⁶⁸ See, e.g., al-Ṣawāḥirī, *Al-Tabri'a*, 5.

⁴⁶⁹ Al-Ṣawāḥirī, *Al-Tabri'a*, 9. See also Terrorism Focus, "Al-Qaeda's al-Zawahiri Repudiates Dr. Fadl," 3-4.

⁴⁷⁰ Al-Ḥakayma qtd. in al-Jarīda, "Al-Ṣawāḥirī Ḥājama Shaykhah."

⁴⁷¹ Al-Sibā'ī, "Ta'līq Awwalī."

⁴⁷² Mamdūḥ Ismā'īl, "Akkada Anna 30 min Qiyādāt al-Jihād Rafaḍūhā famuni'at Ziyāratuhum: Khāl Ayman al-Ṣawāḥirī Yushakkik bi Murāj'āt al-Dukūr Faḍl li Kawnihi Mu'taqalan," *Al-'Arabiyya.nit*: http://www.alarabiya.net/save_pdf.php?cont_id=42168 (10 October 2011). For more details on these arguments, see Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 22-3.

⁴⁷³ See, e.g., Hamzawy and Grebowski, "From Violence to Moderation," 4.

⁴⁷⁴ Al-Bannā, "Jamāl al-Banna Yaktub," 2.

⁴⁷⁵ Ḥamdallah, "Aḥmad Yūsuf Ḥamdallah."

⁴⁷⁶ Political Islam Online, "The Man Who Once Secretly Ruled the 'Islamic Jihad' Speaks out," *Political Islam Online*: <http://www.politicalislam.org/Articles/PI%20901%20Special%20report%20-%20The%20man%20who%20once%20secretly%20ruled%20the%20Islamic%20Jihad.pdf> (2 November 2011)..

lengthy document and did his best to convince others using sophisticated theological and pragmatic arguments to prove his views. This will not be the case for someone under duress.⁴⁷⁷

It is Conviction or Duress?

After careful consideration of both views, the following facts support the view that the revisions were written out of conviction:⁴⁷⁸

- 1- Chronological sequence of events supports the view that the revisions of Faḍl are written willingly. Faḍl called for cessation of attacks on the regime fifteen years before he wrote his revisions when he was free and when there was no pressure of any type laid upon him. This is testified even by Faḍl's rivals and detractors like al-Ḍawāhirī who stated that Faḍl retracted Jihad in 1994 and announced this in his book *al-Jāmi'* to lead a life of calm in Yemen where he was concerned only about his own personal life under the supervision of the Yemeni government.⁴⁷⁹ Such a statement of al-Ḍawāhirī shows lack of consistency in his narrations, as he claimed that Faḍl wrote his revisions under coercion while in another statement he acknowledged that Faḍl retracted earlier in 1994 when coercion was not there. By Faḍl's retraction, al-Ḍawāhirī was referring to the note that Faḍl wrote in the preface of the 2nd edition of his book *al-J āmi'* wherein he harshly criticised al-Jihād Organisation and emphasised that he dissociated himself from all existing Islamist movements.⁴⁸⁰ This was also emphasised by Faḍl himself in an interview with *al-Ḥayāt* Newspaper. In this interview, Faḍl stated that he advised al-Ḍawāhirī and his Organisation twice to stop their attacks on the Egyptian regime.⁴⁸¹ This should prove that Faḍl called for cease of violent operations against the regime when he was not under incarceration, which would give considerable weight to the view that his newly published views were not written under pressure.

Reports made by Usāma Ayyūb, a former Jihadist leader based in Germany, add further weight that Faḍl called for a stop to violent means before he was arrested. Ayyūb said

⁴⁷⁷ Abū Basīr al-Ṭarṭūsī, "Kalima ḥawla Murāj'āt al-Shaykh Sayyid Imām," *Abū Basīr al-Ṭarṭūsī's website*: <http://www.altartosi.com/refutation/refut068.html> (10 October 2011). See more details in Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence" 24-5.

⁴⁷⁸ Points number 1-4 below are based on Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 25-7.

⁴⁷⁹ Al-Ḍawāhirī, *Al-Tabrī'a*, 5.

⁴⁸⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 9-11.

⁴⁸¹ Faḍl, "Al-Ḥayāh fī Sijn Ṭura," 4.

- that he intended to issue a proposal of non-violence, similar to the one issued by the IG, and contacted Faḍl, who was encouraging, for advice. Lawrence Wright states that Ayyūb told him that Faḍl was questioning his thinking before his arrest in Yemen. He added that Ayyūb contacted Faḍl in the early 2000s, informing him of his intention to make a non-violence pact of his own. Ayyūb said that he encouraged him, despite the fact that could not discuss the details due to some security concerns.⁴⁸²
- 2- It has been claimed that the *Wathīqa* was written for appeasement of America but this has been rationally refuted by Faḍl, who said he had authored it in order to correct mistakes made in the name of Jihad and Islam. If this outcome pleases the United States, it cannot be a basis to reject the work, as the aim behind the work is not to benefit the US. In actuality, it brings about more benefits for the Muslims. To bolster this argument, he gave several historical examples, one of these being the Islamic jihad that was waged in the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. None would claim that the jihad was waged to satisfy America and none would ask to stop it, as it brought more benefits for the Muslims than it did for the US. Benefitting the enemy was not the root objective in either of these examples but a by-product of them.⁴⁸³
 - 3- Although Faḍl had staunch views on takfīr and revolting against regimes, nothing in his earlier works indicates his support for the targeting of non-Muslim civilians or tourists. He actually argued in *al-Jāmi'* that if a Muslim were to enter a non-Muslim country, they must not do any harm there as they had entered with a visa, which is considered a covenant of security, which has to be honoured, even if the visa is fake.⁴⁸⁴ This corroborates what he said in the *Wathīqa*, as it was what he had said when he was the emir of al-Jihād.
 - 4- The assertion that other members of al Jihad signed the *Wathīqa* under coercion is countered by the fact that many members supported the revisions of the IG long before Faḍl was arrested. In addition, there had been two earlier endeavours by al-Jihād factions to make revisions. Though these attempts failed for various reasons, they show

⁴⁸² Wright, "The Rebellion Within: A Reporter at Large," 8.

⁴⁸³ Faḍl, "Al-Ḥayāh fī Sijn Ṭura," 4.

⁴⁸⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 653.

that there were a number of members who wanted to make amendments of their own accord, before Faḍl had even written the *Wathīqa*.⁴⁸⁵

Furthermore, ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Munīb, who was an eye witness on the revisions inside prison, emphasised that though the prison officers asked al-Jihād members to sign and approve the revisions, the members had the option to reject them without much difficulty. Munīb stressed that though there were some restrictions⁴⁸⁶ on those who rejected the revisions, such restrictions were bearable whereas the incentives given for the supporters were minimal and could be easily discarded. In addition, there are members who already rejected the revisions and no one could compel them to accept them. Thus, there were limited pressures because the security apparatus did not want to practise serious public pressures in order not to undermine the credibility of the revisions and give others an opportunity to cast doubts on the genuine convictions of the revisionists.⁴⁸⁷

- 5- In his narration of what happened inside prisons when the security apparatus asked al-Jihād prisoners to make revisions similar to those of the IG, Munīb stated that al-Jihād activists were divided into three sections in this regard. The first section accepted everything that the security wanted; a second section rejected the mere idea itself and refused to make any concessions; and the third section led by Faḍl accepted to make the revisions on the condition that they would write whatever they wanted without intervention from the government. Munīb added that though the security officers inclined to those who accepted everything stated by them, the final selection was in favour of Faḍl because of his scholarly weight. Munīb added that the security officers asked Faḍl several times to change parts of the *Wathīqa* but he always refused and insisted on publishing it without any change.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁵ Al-Zayyāt, qtd in Yusrī al- Gharabāwī, “Al-Murāj‘āt min al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād,” proc. of Al-Murāj‘āt min al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād symposium at Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Istrātiyya, *OnIslam.net*: <http://www.onislam.net/arabic/islamyoona/armed-action/98840-2007-07-05%2015-35-08.html> (30 October 2011).

⁴⁸⁶ Such as preventing or restricting family visits and prevention of prisoners from attending exams of courses they were pursuing while imprisoned. Though these restrictions may seem big for normal people, they are very minimal for jihadi prisoners as they are used to severer restrictions and repression.

⁴⁸⁷ Munīb, *Murāj‘āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 10-11.

⁴⁸⁸ For more details, see Munīb, *Murāj‘āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 13-15.

Conclusion

Before summarising the conclusions of this chapter, it is worth clarifying that the controversy and polemics provoked by the new framing of Faḍl and the IG leaders in their revisions, and even the earlier disagreement between al-Jihād and Faḍl regarding some issues in his book *al-Jāmi'* or between different leaders of the IG, are all natural manifestations of any framing process. This is because the generation, elaboration and development of frames are contested processes. This means that movement activists and ideologues cannot construct and impose on their intended targets any version of reality they would like; rather, there are a variety of challenges confronting all those who engage in framing activities.⁴⁸⁹ These challenges include counter-framing by opponents, bystanders, and the media as well as frame disputes within the movements, which have been highlighted in the above section and the 'reactions' section in the previous chapter. The contests also include the conflict between frames and events, which has been highlighted earlier in this chapter and will be further analysed in the last chapter. These multiple prognostic frames of Islamists usually lead to a great deal of internal conflict and competition.⁴⁹⁰

Thus, in addition to the discussion of jihadi polemics and establishing that the revisions of the two groups were the product of genuine convictions of their writers, this chapter has offered a chronological discussion of the history of the two groups and an account of the contextual structural socioeconomic and political conditions that influenced their activities. It briefly answered the question: what are the most important causal reasons that led the IG and al-Jihād to practise violence and then retract from it? In order to do this, the chapter employed a mixture of the structural approaches explained in chapter one and, more particularly, the political process approach, highlighting the political environment, mobilising structures and the ideological framework of both groups both before and after revisions. It divided the history of the two groups into six stages, highlighting the general features of each stage, from their establishment and use of violence until the revisions and participation in political life.

To explain causal reasons, the chapter highlighted the structural strains and miserable living conditions of the Egyptians and how such conditions contributed to the mayhem. As violence

⁴⁸⁹ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 625.

⁴⁹⁰ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and Social Movement," 204.

was not one of the IG objectives or tools of action at the time of its establishment, the chapter, by tracing the context of the IG acts of violence in the 1990s, argued that the violence of the IG in the 1990s was mostly retaliatory in response to the attacks of the regime against them that started mainly because of the IG excessive use of forced *hisba*. Members of the IG justified their violent retaliatory operations by the general justifications of violence in their literature, though in fact the specific religious details in the literature were not observed partly due to the lack of communication with the leadership in the early 1990s. This tells us that the link between religious justifications and actual behaviour is determined by the context.

Likewise, the chapter has shown how the dialectic tension between collective action frames and collective action events (i.e., the theory and practice of the IG) acted as a strong contestant to the framing process of the IG, and eventually led to its modification or transformation. This consequence of a turbulent relationship between collective action framing and collective action practises proves that though framing helps to legitimise and make possible some forms of action, contradictory collective action can transform the meaning and the structure of the discourse, thereby limiting subsequent opportunities for collective action. This means that the discourse affects the events which, in turn, “may change the underlying ideas or beliefs that make up the discourses and frames used by movement actors, resignify which set of collective beliefs are salient, and alter the meaning of actors’ interests—all of which affect the power of a particular discourse or frame.”⁴⁹¹ This clearly explains how the tension between the IG and al-Jihād’s theory and practice partially led to the modification or transformation of their frames.

Thus, the idea of revising the previous ideology arose in the minds of the revisionists as they started to question their ideas and convictions when they found that violence was counterproductive and had earned them and their societies nothing but bloodshed and miserable conditions. The military and political defeat of these movements was a natural product of their failure to achieve a collective popular support for their goals of toppling the regime and also their failure to estimate the huge military and logistic capabilities of a strong state. Added to this was the lack of external logistic and military support to Islamists at the time the Egyptian government was receiving support from major foreign powers such as the U.S. This

⁴⁹¹ Stephen Ellingson, “Understanding the Dialectic of Discourse and Collective Action: Public Debate and Rioting in Antebellum Cincinnati,” *American Journal of Sociology* (101, no. 1 [July 1995]), 136.

made it practically impossible to defeat the government militarily without overwhelming popular support and an uprising.

This overwhelming military and spiritual defeat in addition to the subhuman conditions of imprisoned Islamists and their families and the failure to achieve any of their goals rendered these movements chased and banished from political, social and even religious life, and caused them to lose the support of the cultural context and the political opportunity structures that used to empower their previous approach. Added to that was the loss of public sympathy due to unwarranted bloodshed and the counter-framing by the state's religious establishment and media, which led to a change in public norms of resistance, causing these groups to lose the support of their cultural milieu.

All of these factors were the driving force behind their acceptance of the mere idea of revising their thoughts and convictions. Thus, the IG and al-Jihād experience led them to the conclusion that violence would not yield positive results for themselves or for Islam and the Muslims, which prompted them to rethink their convictions and change their approaches and methodologies in dealing with the religious text and its relationship with the present day reality. This also offers a clear example of the constraints that the cultural context imposes on social movement framing activities and how they can lead to reframing.⁴⁹²

Thus, the above deconstruction of the context of both violence and revisions indicates that it would be an exaggeration to claim that Egyptian Jihadists have disavowed their views regarding using violent means solely for theological reasons or solely for pragmatic reasons. Given the strength of the Sharia arguments as relates to non-violence, it becomes evident that those in control of the discourse concluded to stop violence based on the juristic rules relating to of the effects they have in terms of harm and benefit (gains and losses) and in pursuit of God's pleasure. However, it is it is equally clear that they came to this conclusion only after the suffering of great losses and harm on their part and the part of the Egyptian people in general.⁴⁹³ These two different explanations are in fact interdependent and complementary of

⁴⁹² Framing literature has been repeatedly criticised for its failure to take seriously the constraints that the 'culture out there' imposes on social movement framing activity. As the 'culture out there' refers to causal and ideological factors that led to revisions, this study claims to have shown some of these constraints. For more details, see Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 622.

⁴⁹³ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 25.

each other, for matters of the Sharia are influenced by issues of reality, as will be seen in the theological justifications of the revisions in the following chapters.

Chapter Three: Al-Jihād Organisation: Ideology before Revisions

Introduction

This chapter explores the ideology and framing of al-Jihād Organisation before revisions. It aims to identify and explain the Islamic theological concepts which the Egyptian al-Jihād Organisation (and other Jihadist movements) used to frame and justify violence against local regimes and other local, regional and international entities and individuals. These concepts or frames together form the ideology of al-Jihād Organisation. This chapter serves as a premise for the next chapter and is inseparably associated with it. As the main concepts that this chapter introduces have been given new interpretations after revisions, the following chapter provides an explanation of the new interpretations of the same concepts after revisions. A comparative textual analysis between the two interpretations (pro violence as explained in this chapter and anti-violence as explained in the next chapter) will highlight the change in the ideology and the extent of that change, if any, and also explain the dynamics of change in the revisionists' ideology.

The chapter introduces and defines the Islamic theological concepts or frames (the ideological framework) that Jihadists use to justify violence, and explains their meanings and how they are framed and employed by Jihadists in general and al-Jihād Organisation in particular to justify acts of violence. This is to arrive at and explain the assumptions underpinning the theological process of justifying violence from Jihadists' perspective. Then the chapter, by coding Faḍl's texts, argues that the frame of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr* are Faḍl's major concern and most influential tool to justify violence. As this chapter argues that these two concepts are the most important and most serious frames in the process of justifying violence, they, along with their practical implication of rebellion against rulers, will be introduced first. After that other concepts (frames) will be arranged; firstly, according to their relevance to these two concepts and the influence of these two frames on them, and secondly, based on their influence on the local and international levels. People and entities influenced by these frames are of three kinds: Local Muslim individuals and communities, non-Muslim citizens of Muslim countries, such as the Christians of Egypt, and then non-Muslim countries and their citizens. After categorisation based on their relevance to *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*, the frames related to local violence affecting Muslims will be mentioned first, then those affecting non-Muslim residents of Muslim countries and finally those affecting non-Muslim countries and their citizens. In some cases, there is an

overlap between these categories where an interpretation of one frame affects more than one category. In this case, these frames will be placed in this order: those affecting local Muslims, then local Muslims and/or non-Muslims, and finally local Muslims and non-Muslim foreigners. This categorisation is further motivated by the fact that the ideology of al-Jihād Organisation and Faḍl gives priority to fighting the near enemy (local regimes) over the far enemy (non-Muslim enemies).

By doing the above, this chapter answers two main questions: The first is: what are the religious concepts (frames) upon which al-Jihād as represented by Faḍl founded their violent ideology? And how were these concepts framed to justify violence before revisions? This will be answered by giving an explanation of these concepts and an analysis of how they are framed to support violence in addition to a detailed discussion of Faḍl's ideology before revisions. The second question is: how is *ḥākimiyya* (and its consequence of *takfīr*) the cornerstone in the process of justifying violence and how do they affect other concepts promoting violence? So, the main argument in this chapter shows that *ḥākimiyya* constitutes Faḍl's main concern and primary frame, and that his understanding of *ḥākimiyya* radically influences other issues related to.

The chapter also shows how Faḍl is flexible with practical matters that are not directly related to *ḥākimiyya*. The main point of the argument is: if *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are proven to be the main frames that influence most of the other concepts promoting violence, then the degree of change in Faḍl's ideology can be accurately measured by the degree of change in his ideology on these two frames. Also, if it is shown that Faḍl can be flexible on practical matters that are not related to *ḥākimiyya*, the concessions or retractions he made in his revisions in practical matters could be precisely evaluated. This, when compared and analysed against the arguments in the following chapter, will help understand and accurately measure the degree of change in Faḍl's ideology.

As the aim of this chapter is to analyse the ideology of Faḍl as presented in the theological frames in his writings, textual analysis will be the main tool to analyse the basic tenets of Faḍl's ideology together with the relevant aspects of framing. A look at the literature review in the first chapter shows the different approaches and methodologies used to analyse violence and the renouncement of violence. These different approaches and methodologies resulted in many different theories, all of which depend on external surrounding circumstances to situate and explain violence and nonviolence and all of which try to explain 'why' rather than 'how' this

happened. Though valid to some extent and in certain cases, different methodologies and different theories have led to different, sometimes contradictory, conclusions, all of which are based on exterior circumstances to explain their views and analyses. Therefore, textual analysis will be the best tool here as the aim is to analyse texts to arrive at how the change happened. This will be coupled with the relevant points of framing as the above concepts together constitute the frames or discursive processes through which the group under discussion mobilises its adherents. Discursive processes refer to “the talk and conversations- the speech acts- and written communications of movement members that occur primarily in the context of, or in relation to, movement activities.”⁴⁹⁴

While external causal matters are important to be able to understand violence and nonviolence and their causation, objectively analysing and explaining the thought and ideologies of the concerned groups as shown in their texts can lead to more precise results, since it gives an image with a proof from within the literature itself and leads to more realistic conclusions. This is particularly the case when the question is about ‘how’ rather than ‘why’ the change happened. Thus, after presenting a detailed description and explanation of the frames used to justify violence in the writings of Faḍl, textual analysis will reveal the change in ideology, if any, and will explain how this change happened by exploring, situating, explaining and revealing the tenets and assumptions underpinning arguments of revisionists before and after revisions. The arguments and conclusions of this and the next chapter will give a solid proof of how textual analysis can precisely reveal what structural causal approaches and theories could not.

A survey and coding of the jihadi concepts in the jihadi literature shows the centrality of the concept of *ḥākimiyya* to the jihadi issues and its influence on most of the other concepts related to violence. That is why the jihadi trend intensified tremendously in the second half of the twentieth century after the frame of *ḥākimiyya* had been woven and assigned its current intellectual and political dimension by al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb. The issue of *ḥākimiyya*—which is the main concept employed by Jihadists to issue judgments of *takfīr* to justify violence and rebellion—was framed in its current political form in the twentieth century after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the suspension of many of the Sharia laws that were replaced with colonial powers' laws such as the English and French laws. Jihadi literature illustrates this point, where it points out their goal (motivational framing) to once again set up Sharia rule that had

⁴⁹⁴ Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 623.

been rendered inactive from the time the Islamic caliphate was abolished, as well as overthrowing the 'apostate' rulers of Muslim lands who neglect the application of the Sharia (prognostic framing).⁴⁹⁵

In the case of the IG and al-Jihād, as shown in their literature, local violence or confrontation with the local regime (rebellion against the rulers and their regimes) was the most serious practical implication of the issue of *ḥākimiyya*. In principle, *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are the main tools through which Jihadists justify rebellion, for *takfīr* of the regimes cannot be fully justified except through *ḥākimiyya*. Hence, it is necessary to start by introducing the concept of *ḥākimiyya* and how it integrates with *takfīr* and rebellion.

Ḥākimiyya, Takfīr and Rebellion: Interrelated

Modern Islamic scholarship quite often connotes the meaning of the word *ḥākimiyya* as dominance or authority. The Qur'an does not refer to the word *ḥākimiyya* in this way, and only uses the root H K M and its derivatives. The Qur'an uses the root of this word when mentioning God and human beings, however, the meaning is expressed to various degrees and adapts to signify authority and its many types and forms. Jihadists utilise the word *ḥākimiyya* to express Divine sovereignty only; even though in the Qur'an it has a number of meanings. Therefore, God alone is the legitimate lawgiver with the sole right to lay down and ordain the legislation that guides and directs the affairs of humankind. Qutb, and the Jihadists who followed his thought, opined that, due to this understanding, God alone has sovereignty in all spheres of life; from a religious perspective as well as politically and legally.⁴⁹⁶ This study is using this understanding of the word as it is interpreted by Jihadists.

As for *takfīr*, it means ascribing a Muslim to apostasy or disbelief. *Takfīr* is a weighty matter in Islam, which prescribes that the apostate should receive the death penalty. Indeed, it has serious ramifications. Because the dominant view in Islamic legislation states that insurrection against a Muslim ruler is proscribed, even if he was a tyrant,⁴⁹⁷ the only way in which rebellion

⁴⁹⁵ The writings of Faḍl and the IG are also laden with such reasoning, as will be shown below. An example of these in other jihadi writings is Faraj, *Al-Farīda al-Ghāiba*, 4-6; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 29.

⁴⁹⁶ For more information about this concept, see Khir, "Sovereignty," *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*, ed., Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Washington DC: Brill Online [2009]) (last accessed 14 May 2011). See also, Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 26-7.

⁴⁹⁷ See, for example, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, no date), 13: 7-8; Yahya b. Sharaf al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ al-Nawawī 'alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1392 A.H.), 12:

against a ruler can be validated is to declare him an apostate. *Al-khurūj ‘alā al-ḥākim* (rebellion against the ruler) is the practical implication of the Jihadist understanding of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*. Rebellion here refers to armed revolt aimed at the ruler of an Islamic territory and doing so with the intention to install a Muslim ruler who is just. These are the three main frames which together constitute the jihadi understanding of ‘jihad’; struggling against regimes that are considered ‘apostate’.⁴⁹⁸ Of these, *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are diagnostic frames while rebellion is a prognostic frame as the first two serve as justification (diagnosis) of the action of ‘rebellion’ that needs to be taken (prognosis).

Islamic legislation differentiates between Muslim rulers and apostate (*kāfir*) ones. If the ruler turns despot, but is still classified as a Muslim, the dominant view, which is also the view of Jihadists, is that it is impermissible to revolt against him.⁴⁹⁹ Scholars are of the opinion that if a Muslim ruler leaves the fold of Islam, it is incumbent (varying between permissible and obligatory) on the Muslims to depose him, however, the legitimacy of doing so depends on a number of considerations and circumstances. The most important of these is having the capacity to make rebellion successful without causing bloodshed or harm that is greater than the benefits of ousting this apostate ruler.⁵⁰⁰ Thus, in order to justify violence against their regimes, Jihadists have to declare these regimes apostate; and to declare them apostate, they frame mainly in *ḥākimiyya*. Therefore, *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are necessary to justify any act of violence against rulers and regimes of Muslim countries.⁵⁰¹

In religious exegesis terms, there is a difference of opinions among early Muslim scholars on violation of God’s *ḥākimiyya* and whether or not a person is guilty of apostasy if he rules with a law other than what God ordained. Believing this to be so is based on interpreting the Quranic verse which reads, “And whoever does not judge by what God has revealed, then it is those who are the disbelievers.” [Qur’an 5:44]. A number of scholars such as al-Suddī and Ibrahim al-Nakh‘ī, opine that the disbelief mentioned in the verse means major disbelief (*kufṛun akbar*) which

244; Muhammad b. ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār min Aḥādīth Sayyid al-Akhyār Sharḥ Muntaqa al-Akḥbār* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1973), 4: 511 & 7: 356- 62.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 27-8.

⁴⁹⁹ See, e.g. al-Zawāhirī, *Al-Tbarī’a*, 64.

⁵⁰⁰ These conditions are detailed more particularly in books of creed. For an overview of these conditions, see, e.g., Ḥāfiẓ, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 97-101.

⁵⁰¹ Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 29-30. Apostasy in general can be applied to individuals for several reasons, but in case of rulers and Jihadists, the main reason used to apply apostasy to the rulers is *ḥākimiyya* and then *walā’*, as explained in this dissertation and argued throughout the jihadi literature.

drives a person outside the fold of Islam; others, such as Tāwūs and Ibn Jurayj, opine differently and deduce this to be a form of minor disbelief (*kufṛun dūna kufr*); meaning that it does not render the person outside the fold of Islam; moreover, other scholars, such as al-Ḥasan and Ibn Mas'ūd, believe that if someone rules by a law that God did not prescribe, they do not become apostates. This is so unless their ruling is accompanied by them renouncing God's Law or ridiculing it., such as Ibn 'Āshūr, argue that this is just a wrongdoing and deviation; and others, such as al-Sha'bī and al-Naḥḥās,⁵⁰² view that the verse is speaking about the Jews and that is why it does not apply to Muslims.⁵⁰³

Though the above scholars were merely interpreting the verse in theological terms without politically projecting it on rulers or others, generally speaking, Jihadists adopt the view that a person is guilty of major disbelief if he rules with a law other than what God ordained, thus, rendering him apostate, and they politically framed this interpretation by projecting it on rulers and their regimes.⁵⁰⁴ So, aggression against such governments is established on the basis of *takfir*. In fact, there would be no religious justification to rebel against such governments if the Muslims saw that the rulers had not been rendered apostate, even if they are corrupt and tyrant. If it is believed that they are apostate, then the religious rationale comes into play as well as the considerations of such factors as capacity and harm and benefits.⁵⁰⁵

There are a number of considerations that must be taken into account before the theoretical prescription of *takfir* can be applied to any one individual or group. This is so for anyone who sees that ruling by a law other than what God ordained brings about disbelief. General, theoretical rulings (*aḥkām muṭlaqa*) and implementing them to any one person or people necessitates that conditions have been fulfilled and impediments (*taḥaqquq al-shurūṭ wa intifā' al-mawānī*) have been removed. General, theoretical rulings (*aḥkām muṭlaqa*) and how they

⁵⁰² The above scholars are classical exegetes of the Quran who interpreted the verses of the Quran that speak about ruling with other than what God has revealed (*ḥākimiyya*). The relevance of mentioning them here is that they are regarded as the Salaf, and therefore their opinions in this regard are highly appreciated by others, particularly Salafi Jihadists, and are taken as the basis of the different views on the issue among later scholars.

⁵⁰³ For an overview of these opinions, see, e.g., al-Qurṭubī, *A-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, ed., Aḥmad al-Bardūnī and Ibrāhīm Aṭfīs (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1985), 6: 190-1; Ibn 'Āshūr, *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* (Tunisia: Dār Saḥnūn li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1997), 6: 210-13; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, ed., Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāma (Cairo: Dār Ṭība li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 2000), 3:119-20. See also Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 29-30.

⁵⁰⁴ This is clearly visible throughout the jihadi literature. See, e.g., any of the writings of the two groups under discussion and any of the writings of al-Qaeda. For more details and explanations on the arguments of classical and modern Muslim scholars on this issue, see Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 30-40.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 29.

are applied to a person or people, must satisfy the fulfilment of some conditions while ensuring that impediments (*taḥaqquq al-shurūṭ wa intifā' al-mawānī'*) are absent.⁵⁰⁶ It is not allowed—and this is acknowledged by jihadists - to rebel against Muslim rulers,⁵⁰⁷ and they frame their pursuit of dissent to the way in which they have understood and construed the verses mentioned previously along with some Prophetic sayings (*Ḥadīth*), arguing that any rulers who leave the fold of Islam (become apostate) do so because they have failed to adhere to and rule by the law imposed by God. Therefore, the controversy surrounding *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are of pivotal importance to jihadists as these are necessary if they are to condone acts of dissent against Muslim rulers and their regimes.⁵⁰⁸ Due to the interrelated nature of these three central concepts, the discussion around them will take place under one heading.

Al-Jihād Organisation: Ideological Stances before Revisions

The discussion on the pro-violence writings of al-Jihād Organisation will be confined to the writings of Faḍl alone, being the main writer of the literature on violence and the sole writer of the revisions. Others only signed and approved what he wrote in his revisions. Though Faḍl left al-Jihād Organisation in 1993 for logistic and practical consideration, this did not affect his theological and religious credibility. He is still considered, as acknowledged even by his opponents, the most important and most credible spiritual leader and ideologue of the different factions of the Organisation. His writings are still considered the manifesto of Jihadists worldwide and he enjoys a renowned status among Jihadists in general and al-Jihād factions in particular.⁵⁰⁹ Therefore, it was him only who could unite the different jihadi factions after several attempts of revisions have failed.

Generally speaking, al-Jihād in general and Faḍl in particular finished their first book only in Afghanistan. By 1989, Faḍl had finished his famous jihadi book '*Al-'Umda fī l'dād al-'Udda li al-*

⁵⁰⁶ It may be helpful to offer a scenario: A is of the opinion that if someone were to rule by using a law that differs from Divinely ordained law then that would entail apostasy; and then B actually rules with manmade law. After establishing that apostasy results from governing with manmade law (the General theoretical ruling), A cannot say that B is apostate (i.e., apply the general theoretical ruling of *takfīr* to this specific person) except when: first, A is an expert in Sharia and so is familiar with all the conditions and circumstances that would have compelled B to behave in this way second, A ensures that all the necessary conditions have been met by B in order for him to be deemed apostate, and third, all impediments have been removed for B, such as ignorance or coercion, as these would nullify the claim of apostasy. Islamic books concerned with creed detail the conditions and impediments surrounding the issue of *takfīr*. See Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 30.

⁵⁰⁷ See, e.g., al-Zawāhirī, *Al-Tabrī'a*, 64.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 30.

⁵⁰⁹ See Kamolnick, "Al Qaeda's Sharia Crisis," 395; Ian Black, "Violence won't Work: How Author of 'Jihadists' Bible' Stirred Up a Storm. Revisionist Message from Prison Cell Shakes Al-Qaeda Colleagues," *The Guardian* ([27 July 2007] Available <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/jul/27/alqaida.egypt>), (last accessed 26 November 2015).

Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh (The Master in Preparing for Jihad in the Way of God). The book spoke about the virtues and etiquettes of jihad and was meant for exhorting and guiding the Muslim youth confronting the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Yet, it included sections on ‘infidel local regimes’ and the necessity of toppling them and establishing the Islamic Caliphate. *Al-‘Umda* was, and is still, highly appraised and well received by jihadi groups who considered it their manifesto.⁵¹⁰ By 1993, Faḍl finished his encyclopaedic book *‘Al-Jāmi‘ fī Ṭalab al-‘Ilm al-Sharīf’* which tackled several issues of interest to Islamists and included more radical arguments on jihadi issues especially *takfīr*.⁵¹¹ In this book, Faḍl so widened the scope of *takfīr* that it included a wide range of civilian Muslims. He also emphasised and widened his previous views on *ḥākimiyya* and the necessity of armed rebellion against rulers of Muslim countries which he considered to be abodes of disbelief. Following is a review of Faḍl's views and framing on the jihadi concepts that contributed to violence as explained in these two books.

Before Revisions: *Ḥākimiyya*, *Takfīr* and Rebellion

The IG and al-Jihād framed in these three concepts to express their view on legal and societal governance and their conception of how to put it right. In all of Faḍl's arguments, it appears that his understanding of *ḥākimiyya* is the main reason behind his *takfīrī* approach and the subsequent call for armed rebellion against local regimes. As with other issues, he frames his input within an encapsulating interpretation of some Islamic texts.

Faḍl considers rulers who do not implement the Islamic Sharia apostate, as in doing so, the individual violates God's laws and instead, adheres to the laws of man, so it is said that such a person is guilty of ascribing partners with God (polytheism) because he has failed to acknowledge God's sole right to legislate and command. To support this, Faḍl quotes the verse: {Legislation is not but for God. He has commanded that you worship not except Him.} [Quran 12:40]⁵¹² Faḍl infers from that verse that whoever confers God's right to legislate and command on a mere human being has, in fact, joined partners with God and thus has committed disbelief. This is also confirmed by the verse: {Those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are indeed the disbelievers.} [Quran 5:44]. Faḍl adds that such a person is undoubtedly a disbeliever

⁵¹⁰ See, e.g., Black, “Violence won’t Work.”

⁵¹¹ Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 7-8.

⁵¹² All translations of Quranic verses in the dissertation are mine. In case of doubt, various translations online might be consulted, but no particular published translation is used every time throughout the text.

because God says: {Then those who disbelieve equate [others] with their Lord.} [Quran 6:1] According to Faḍl, this verse means that such people assign a partner and a counterpart to God (i.e., commit polytheism and disbelief) in His personal attributes and actions including legislation (*ḥākimiyya*).⁵¹³

Therefore, he denounces any social, cultural, political or economic system that is not based on the laws of God and declares it to be polytheism: "By this, you, Muslim brother, can recognise that God did not give mankind the right to develop their own laws, whether positive laws, democracy, socialism, communism or any other form they can devise. All systems developed at the hands of men are a deviation from what God has revealed. Thus, they clearly fall under the category of disbelief (*kufṛun bawāḥ*). It should also be clear that all the governing systems of the *ṭawāghīt*⁵¹⁴, which is something that we find in a number of Muslim countries, blatantly defy God's divine right over His creation on this earth."⁵¹⁵ This represents the main injustice framing for Faḍl. Faḍl also interprets and frames the following verses to support his argument that rulers are apostate not only because they implement positive laws but also because they legislate these laws: {Is it that they [who care for no more than this world] believe in forces supposed to have a share in God's divinity?} [Quran 42:21]; {They have taken their priests and monks as lords besides God.} [Quran 9:31]. So, he argues that though many such rulers insist that they are Muslims, they are in fact apostates since they not only govern by a law that was not ordained by God, but they also enact laws as they desire, and in so doing, have designated themselves as lords and lawmakers instead of God.⁵¹⁶

After establishing the apostasy of those rulers (diagnostic framing), Faḍl has moved to what he sees as the only viable way of defending the usurped Divine sovereignty (prognostic framing). It is armed rebellion and nothing else. Sharia texts outline the necessary response of Muslims in

⁵¹³ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 3-4; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 37.

⁵¹⁴ *Ṭawāghīt* is the plural of *Ṭāghūt*, which originally refers to false gods such as pre-Islamic gods of Arabia in Mecca, namely: al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā. The phrase was also used to refer to Satan, magician and dissenter, as well as to any force that stood against Islam. However, the term is commonly used by Jihadists nowadays to refer to current rulers who do not apply the Islamic Sharia. They also use the term to refer to the laws that contradict the Islamic Sharia. Both the laws and the rulers are called *ṭawāghīt*. Jihadists call them as such because they consider them 'false gods' taken as deities besides God. For further information, see P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, eds., "Ṭāghūt," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Second Edition (Brill Online, 2014: http://www.brillonline.nl/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/t-a-g-h-u-t-COM_1147 [accessed 05 October 2014]);

Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 24..

⁵¹⁵ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 4.

⁵¹⁶ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 316; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 37.

the face of *ṭawāghīt*: fighting and nothing else as per the Prophetic *ḥadīth* in this regard⁵¹⁷ In addition, there is common consensus among scholars that such rulers be removed. For this reason, performing *ijtihād* (scholastic human reasoning) on the subject of dealing with *ṭawāghīt* is not allowed since there are sacred texts and the unanimity of scholars in this regard. Anyone who insists on performing *ijtihād* even though there are sacred texts and the unanimity of scholars, will have deviated from right guidance.⁵¹⁸ Thus, by considering fighting the only acceptable way, Faḍl not only refused any other peaceful form of opposition or resistance but also considered mere accepting of such peaceful solutions as flagrant aberration.

Considering armed rebellion as the only acceptable way of dealing with rulers stems from Faḍl's consideration of ruler's violation of *ḥākimiyyah* as the mother problem. This is not the case with the IG as the IG suggested other solutions, besides rebellion, such as *da'wa* and *ḥisba*, because *ḥākimiyya* to them is *a central*, not *the* central frame. This confirms the premise of some social movements' theorists that there is correspondence between social movements' diagnostic and prognostic framing, .i.e., the identification of specific problems and causes (diagnostic framing) tends to constraint the range of possible 'reasonable' solutions and strategies advocated (prognostic framing).⁵¹⁹ Here, Faḍl placed constraints on the 'prognostic framing' of his major issue of *ḥākimiyya* by restricting the remedy to armed rebellion while the IG suggested other solutions because their core framing includes two other concepts besides *ḥākimiyya*.⁵²⁰

As words like armed rebellion are not culturally resonant with dominant customs and mores, Faḍl framed them in religiously and culturally respectable and resonant terms such as 'jihad' 'defending the Divinity of God' and 'religious duty'. Faḍl argued that violation of God's sovereignty makes it a **religious duty** upon Muslims to hasten and preserve the Divine rights of God by ousting those rulers and their regimes. This is called in the Sharia, Faḍl notes, '**jihad in the cause of God Almighty**'.⁵²¹

⁵¹⁷ This refers to the *ḥadīth* in which Prophet Muḥammad told his companions that there would be unjust rulers. The companions asked the Prophet "should we fight those rulers?" He answered, "No, unless you see a crystal clear act of disbelief that you have Divine proof thereon."

⁵¹⁸ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 319; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 37-8.

⁵¹⁹ See, e.g., Snow and Benford, "Framing Processes," 616.

⁵²⁰ As explained before, 'prognostic framing', refers to the articulation of a proposed solution to the problem, a plan of action, and the strategies for carrying out the plan to address the question of what is to be done. See, e.g., Snow and Benford, "Framing Processes," 616-18.

⁵²¹ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 4.

By this, Faḍl used one of the frame alignment⁵²² strategies known as ‘bridging’⁵²³ by linking his frame of rebellion to a highly respected duty (jihad) which he considered a top priority obligation. As traditional ‘jihad’ is usually perceived to be a fight between a Muslim and a non-Muslim country, Faḍl noted that fighting local regimes is not only a form of jihad but is also more important than fighting non-Muslims. Thus, according to Faḍl, jihad against those ‘apostate’ rulers (the near enemy) must be the primary concern over engaging others like Jews, Christians, and polytheists (the far enemy).⁵²⁴ By declaring so, Faḍl is in line with the old traditional jihadi ideas and frames⁵²⁵ that prioritise fighting the near enemy (apostate local regimes) over the far enemy (America and the West).

As Faḍl saw jihad against those *ṭawāghīt* as a top priority individual obligation, he removed the constraints that could possibly hinder the application of that prognostic framing. An example of a constraint that he removed is arguing that it is permissible for a single person to fight a large group of the supporters of those rulers **even if he is alone** (Jihad of the individual[s]). Taking into consideration the difficulty and great sacrifice involved, Faḍl stated that such an individual fighter (or small group) has the choice not to fight a large group and may run away because of their numbers. However, he linked the choice of fighting to the motivational frame of ‘martyrdom’ in order to encourage activists to fight, completely disregarding pragmatic considerations and the likely damage resulting from one person or a small group fighting a large group. “However, if he continues to resist and wants to gain martyrdom, this is good.” Faḍl notes. Having stated that, Faḍl reemphasised the importance and preference of collective fighting to achieve the intended goal of ousting these rulers, “Though fighting by individual(s) is permissible, the obligation is to fight in large groups as the purpose is to establish the religion and this can be attained only through fighting in large groups, not individually.”⁵²⁶

⁵²² Frame alignment is defined as, “the linkage of individual and SMO [Social Movement Organization] interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary.” See David A. Snow et al, “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” *American Sociological Review* (51, no. 4 [August 1986]), 464.

⁵²³ Bridging is a frame alignment strategy that involves the linking of two or more ideologically coherent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a specific problem or issue, through linking movement organisational frame(s) with an un-mobilised sentiment pool. See Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 624.

⁵²⁴ Faḍl, *Al-‘Umda*, 321-2; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 38.

⁵²⁵ Jihadi movements were first established with the goal of restoring the caliphate by fighting apostate local regimes, seizing local power and then using these captured Muslim countries to fight the far enemy. This is clear throughout early jihadi literature, e.g., Faraj, *al-Farīda al-Ghā’iba*. Hence, the traditional jihadi ideas gave priority to fighting the near enemy over fighting the far enemy. This was changed only after al-Qaeda was established in 1998 when al-Qaeda leaders gave priority to fighting the far enemy.

⁵²⁶ Faḍl, *Al-‘Umda*, 280.

Having recognised the difficulty of doing so, Faḍl inserted the condition of capacity. Rebellion becomes compulsory when Muslims have the capacity to make it successfully. In fact, there is nothing unique or new in inserting the condition of capacity here, as it is firmly established in Islam that all the commands of the Islamic Sharia are subject to having the capacity to do them. When the capacity is missing, there is no obligation.⁵²⁷ However, Faḍl notes, if Muslims become incapable of launching 'jihad' against those rulers, due to their weakness or lack of capacity, they have to make preparation for jihad, without trying any other means of reform. "Whoever says that they are unable to engage in insurrection, I respond by saying that compulsion at a time when the individual feels incapacitated is preparation, not participating in polytheistic parliaments."⁵²⁸ To grant his argument credibility, Faḍl, like other Jihadists, usually supports his opinion with quotations from the books of the greatest scholars of the Salaf. In this regard, he quoted Ibn Taymiya's (d. 1328) statement that It is incumbent on the believers to prepare for jihad in terms of weaponry and power, if jihad cannot be waged because of one's inability. This is because whatever is indispensable in order to secure something that is obligatory, becomes itself mandatory.⁵²⁹

To Salafi Jihadists in general and the IG and al-Jihād in particular, Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328) and Ibn al-Qayyim (d.1350) are the most quoted scholars. With exception of their political interpretations of Islam, Jihadists follow the Salafi creed and prefer Salafi interpretations of Islam and therefore they are called 'Salafi Jihadists'. As Ibn Taymiya and his student Ibn al-Qayyim are the most important figures of Salafism, Salafis in general and Salafi Jihadists in particular hold them in the highest esteem and base many of their arguments on their views. Of these two, Ibn Taymiya stands as the most quoted and most important not only because he was the founder of contemporary Salafism but also because he issued a number of fatwas on jihad and political Islam that nowadays Jihadists use as their base to support and justify their stances. Ibn Taymiya lived in an era laden with political turmoil, such as the invasion of the Muslim World by the Mongols, and he issued a number of fatwas on jihad in response to the political affairs

⁵²⁷ For a full discussion of this, see the commentary on the Quranic verses [2:286 & 64:16] in books of exegesis (*Tafsīr*), e.g., Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurān al-'Aẓīm*, 1: 738-9. See also Taqiyy al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiya, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, ed., 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim (Medina, Saudi Arabia, Majma' al-Malik Fahd li Ṭibā'at al-Muṣḥf al-Sharīf, 1995), 20: 49-50.

⁵²⁸ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 319.

⁵²⁹ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 4; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 37-8.

that existed at his time. Therefore, Ibn Taymiyya's writings in general and volume 28 of his *Fatāwā* in particular are the most quoted by Jihadists.⁵³⁰

It is noticeable that in almost all of the texts which Faḍl quoted to support his views on fighting rulers, Muslim scholars whom he quoted were speaking about jihad in the traditional sense of the word, which refers to the case when a Muslim army confronts a non-Muslim army; they were not speaking about fighting Muslim rulers. Like other Jihadists, Faḍl invoked those texts speaking about traditional jihad and applied them to fighting Muslim rulers who do not apply the Sharia, on the assumption that fighting those rulers is also 'jihad'. However, to call fighting those rulers 'jihad' is a disputable claim made by Jihadists in the twentieth century. Even when Muslim jurists spoke about fighting a rebellious group, they did not call it 'jihad' but called it 'fighting of the rebellious' (*Qitāl al-Bughāh*).⁵³¹ This is also the case when fighting 'the refraining group',⁵³² they have not called it jihad. They have called it, as in the jihadi literature itself, "fighting the refraining group" (*Qital al-Ṭā'ifa al-Mumtani'a*).⁵³³ Thus, most of Faḍl's argument on the necessity of fighting local regimes rely theologically on arguments and views of classical Muslim scholars on the traditional concept of jihad that were originally intended for actual traditional jihad (a Muslim army fighting a non-Muslim army) rather than for acts of violence that Jihadists nowadays call 'jihad'.

By declaring that it is a duty on all Muslims to fight their regimes or, at least, make preparation for that fighting, Faḍl is requesting all Muslims to always be in a state of fighting or readiness for military confrontations with their local regimes, as if they have no other personal, familial or social duties and commitments. By this, he is not only equating this with jihad but is also invoking the rulings of what is known in Islamic jurisprudence as 'defensive jihad' (*Jihād al-Dafʿ*)⁵³⁴ and is applying them to the case of rulers who do not apply the Islamic Sharia. This is

⁵³⁰ For more details on these scholars and their influence on Jihadism, see, e.g., Habeck, *Jihadist Ideology*, 12-14; H Laoust, "Ibn Taymiyya," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs eds. (Brill Online: http://www.brillonline.nl/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ibn-taymiyya-SIM_3388 [05 October 2014]).

⁵³¹ See the chapters titled as such in books of *Fiqh* (jurisprudence); e.g., Zakariyya al-Anṣārī, *Asnā al-Maṭālib fī Sharḥ Rawḍ al-Tālib*, ed. Muḥammad Tāmir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000), 4: 1111 ff; Wizārat al-Awqāf wa al-Shuʿūn al-Islāmiyya, *Al-Mawsūʿa al-Fiqhiyya al-Kuwaytiyya* (Egypt: Dār al-Ṣafwa, 1404 AH), 32: 317 ff.

⁵³² Explanation of this term will be mentioned later in this chapter.

⁵³³ See for example, Faraj, *Al-Farīda al-Ghāʾiba*, 9; Al-Jamāʿa al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha*, 27.

⁵³⁴ This kind of jihad refers to the case when a Muslim country is attacked by a foreign non-Muslim enemy. In such a case, resisting that enemy becomes an individual obligation on all Muslims including women and slaves who are not normally requested to participate in other kinds of jihad. This is in contrast with the other type of jihad known as *jihād al-ṭalab* (offensive Jihad) in which Muslims are not attacked but instead send armies to the enemies to spread Islam.

one of the strategies of 'frame alignment' known as frame amplification which is a process of idealisation, embellishment, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or beliefs (jihad) so that the proffered frames (*ḥākimiyya* and rebellion) are associated with these cultural beliefs and values to make it resonate with potential constituents.⁵³⁵ This is what Faḍl did when he amplified and invigorated rebellion as 'defensive jihad' that requires every single Muslim to engage in it to defend his country and religion. Making preparation an individual obligation entails that every Muslim who does not make such military preparations will be neglectful of a top important religious duty and would therefore be, in the least, a sinner and wrongdoer.⁵³⁶

In order to motivate audience and adherents, Faḍl employed what framing researchers call 'motivational framing', which is the final core framing task that provides a 'call to arms' or rationale for engaging in collective action. This is done by constructing appropriate vocabularies of motive.⁵³⁷ As shown in his arguments, Faḍl's motivational framing or main vocabularies of motive were restoration of Islamic caliphate, rule and supremacy of religion, jihad, annihilating tyrants and oppressors, martyrdom, etc. These theologically constructed motivational vocabularies provided adherents with compelling accounts for engaging in collective action and for sustaining their participation. For those seeking solutions for their social and economic problems, they provided a promise of conforming to a set of commonly agreed principles such as welfare and justice.

Before Revisions: Democracy and Participation in Political Life

The above discussion of Faḍl's conception of *ḥakimiyya* showed that Faḍl refused any means of change other than armed rebellion as the violation of *ḥakimiyya* rendered those rulers apostate. Therefore, any form of engagement with those rulers even through democratic or political opposition was not only rejected by Faḍl but also declared as a form of polytheism. In *al-Jāmi'*, Faḍl so widened and extended the frame of *ḥākimiyya* that he issued the ruling of *takfir* for sovereign leaders and their regimes; including their parliaments, the judiciary and anyone who

This latter type of jihad is classified as *farḍ kifāya* (communal obligation), i.e., compulsory on the Muslim community collectively but not individually; which means that not every capable Muslim has to do it, but it suffices to have some members of the Muslim community who can sufficiently perform it. See, e.g., Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," 15.

⁵³⁵ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 624.

⁵³⁶ Rashwān, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 340.

⁵³⁷ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 617.

condones or participates in drawing up or enforcing manmade laws, as well as the public who elect members of parliaments or accept the democratic process. They are all ‘disbelievers’ because they help or support apostate rulers in their challenge of God’s *ḥākimiyya*.⁵³⁸

In *al-Jāmiʿ* Faḍl considered democracy to be the *ḥākimiyya* of people that opposes the *ḥākimiyya* of God as it means that supremacy and authority will be for people who make legislations contrary to those of God. This includes all laws and constitutions of secularism which was imposed on Muslim lands by colonial powers. So anyone who drafts or takes part in these constitutions or accepts to be governed by them is a disbeliever. Faḍl went as far as rejecting the mere idea of drafting even ‘Islamic’ constitutions that are derived from the Islamic Sharia, and considered this to be religious innovation (*Bidʿa*) that contradicts Islam and substitutes the Divine constitution represented in the Quran and the Sunna.⁵³⁹ He also devoted lengthy pages to criticising those who call for establishing Islamic political parties and accused them of dividing the Muslim Ummah.⁵⁴⁰

Faḍl’s arguments that refuse any form of peaceful solutions or means of change constitute what framing researchers call ‘counter framing’. As prognostic framing (here rebellion) takes place within a multi-organisational field that includes various social movements, their opponents, targets of influence, media, and bystanders, it follows that a social movement’s prognostic framing activity typically includes refutations of the logic or efficacy of solutions advocated by opponents as well as a rationale for its own remedies.⁵⁴¹ This is what Faḍl did by counter-framing other counterclaims of peaceful democratic solutions by extending his central frame of *ḥākimiyya* to include issues of democratic and political participation.

Faḍl’s detailed and extra clarified response to opposing framing confirms the assertion that opposing framing activity can affect a movement’s framings: by putting movement ideologue’s on the defensive, at least temporarily, and by frequently forcing it to develop and elaborate prognoses more clearly than otherwise might have been the case.⁵⁴² In the Egyptian case, the counter-framing came from the state, al-Azhar scholars, secularists and other moderate Islamic movements such as the MB. In addition, opposing framing served as a constraint of Faḍl’s

⁵³⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmiʿ*, 895-1044; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 11.

⁵³⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmiʿ*, 877.

⁵⁴⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmiʿ*, 884-5.

⁵⁴¹ Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 616-17.

⁵⁴² Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 617.

original framing that forced him to advance some concessions and accept a temporary alternative for armed rebellion. Faḍl declared that armed rebellion is the only acceptable way though there are other **temporary** ways of reform that can be applied until capacity is obtained. These temporary ways of reform are preaching (*Da'wa*), giving advice, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong and saying a word of truth to a tyrant ruler. This is what should be done until Muslims get enough power and establishment that enable them to overthrow apostate rulers by armed rebellion.

Therefore, Faḍl sees that hastiness in launching rebellion involves lots of harm and corruption and therefore preparation of sufficient power is necessary before rebellion. Thereupon, though he strongly supports rebellion, Faḍl insists that proper military training and preparation is a must before clashes with the governing authorities in Muslims' lands. That is why he has warned enthusiastic Jihadists against launching any military operations against the regime in Egypt before gaining the required power and military preparation as he believes that 'hastiness causes failure and deprivation'.⁵⁴³

Faḍl counter-framed opponent's arguments not only by defiling democracy per se as '*kufṛ*', 'new god' and 'a modern form of idolatry', but also by placing more emphasis and elaboration, still within his master central of *ḥākimiyya*, on the evilness and illegality of such tools of democracy as elections. According to Faḍl, democracy is a new god and a modern form of idolatry. It is a rebellion against the authority of God. "Democracy assigns to man the attribute of Lordship by giving him the absolute right of legislation, thereby making him a god besides God and an associate in the Divine right of legislation."⁵⁴⁴ By this, democracy means violation of the divine right of legislation, and therefore both members of parliaments and those who elect them are disbelievers along with the judges and supervisors as well as delegates of candidates in elections as they all either exercise the act of disbelief (democracy), elect or help those who exercise it.⁵⁴⁵

Faḍl did not even differentiate between members of the parliament who accept democracy as such and Islamic members of parliament who try to make use of this tool to support Islamic causes and issues. So, according to Faḍl, whoever accepts the democratic system is undoubtedly *kāfir* and those who claim that they do not accept democracy but join the parliament to support Islamic issues and make reform are also *Kāfirs* as they are trying to deceive ignorant people and

⁵⁴³ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 383-4.

⁵⁴⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 160.

⁵⁴⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 158-67.

find excuses for themselves to practice *kufr* under legal pretexts.⁵⁴⁶ Faḍl further criticised some scholars who allowed participation in parliaments such as Ibn Bāz and Safr al-Ḥawālī.⁵⁴⁷ Having emphasised all of this, Faḍl concluded, "Whoever shows us *kufr*, we will show him *takfīr*."⁵⁴⁸

As per the above definitions, Faḍl gave a short list of those who are *Kāfir* in the countries governed by positive laws, 'such as all Muslim countries nowadays'. The most important categories listed by Faḍl are:

- a- Rulers of Muslim countries.
- b- Judges of the courts of these countries.
- c- Whoever willingly files a case in these courts.
- d- Members of legislative councils in these countries such as parliaments. This is because it is they who approve these laws of disbelief and legalise the new laws.
- e- Those who elect members of these councils and parliaments. This is because it is they who elect them as gods to legislate laws besides God.
- f- Any person who calls for such elections or encourages people to participate in them.
- g- Whoever accepts or gives oath of allegiance to the rulers of such countries.
- h- Soldiers who defend these conditions of disbelief, as they fight for the sake of *ṭāghūt* while God says "And those who disbelieve fight for the Sake of *ṭāghūt*." [Quran 4: 76]. The *Ṭāghūt* for which they fight here is of two kinds, Faḍl notes. The first is the *tāghūt* of legislation represented in positive laws and constitutions and the second is the rulers who apply these laws.
- i- Anyone who defends these apostate regimes by fighting such as soldiers and the police, or by words such as press and media figures and even sheikhs.

As a result, it is prohibited for Muslims to serve in the armies of these apostate regimes or work in any position that helps or supports these rulers as this leads to apostasy. Furthermore, no Muslim is allowed to obey the rulers of these countries, and Muslims are free to break their laws.⁵⁴⁹ The most important implications of Faḍl's judgment of *takfīr* on those who are included in the above categories include: cancellation of the guardianship of such 'disbelievers',

⁵⁴⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 161-2.

⁵⁴⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 158-66.

⁵⁴⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 167.

⁵⁴⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 539-40.

nullification of their prayers and the prayers of those who pray behind them and the annulment of their marriages. They also cannot inherit from a Muslim nor get inherited by a Muslim and their life becomes so violable that anyone can kill them.⁵⁵⁰

So, *ḥākimiyya* is the reason why Faḍl declared all of those categories of people apostate. In other words, they are disbelievers because they either rule with positive laws or help or accept the rule of those who apply or legislate these laws, and all texts of *ḥākimiyya* were invoked to support this line of argument.

New Rules of *Takfīr*

The above demonstration shows that because of Faḍl's understanding of *ḥākimiyya* he accused of apostasy and rendered violable the lives of wide segments of Muslims using his most serious tools of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*. However, Faḍl did not stop there but rather deduced and introduced new rules of *takfīr* that opposed the common mainstream rules outlined in Sunni books of creed.⁵⁵¹ The new rules are meant to defend and buttress his framing of *ḥākimiyya* and prove the apostasy of rulers and their supporters, thereby lifting any constraints on the legality and morality of his prognostic framing of rebellion. In doing so, he criticised almost everyone including the greatest scholars he often quoted such as Ibn Taymiya and Ibn al-Qayyim. In all of the views he expressed, he not only counter-framed and rejected other opinions but also refused to accept the mere idea that these issues are subject to acceptable difference of views. His views are the only acceptable ones as they are either agreed upon or the only correct ones.

Among the new rules of *takfīr* which Faḍl introduced is the cancellation of such preconditions of *takfīr* as *jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl*.⁵⁵² So, he argued that a person who says or does something that causes apostasy or disbelief (*kufr*) is automatically considered apostate (*takfīr*) without the need for investigating whether or not he said or did so while considering it lawful (*istiḥlāl*) or as a denial

⁵⁵⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 540-2.

⁵⁵¹ Usually, rules of *takfīr* are discussed in books of Creed (*'Aqīda*) such as al-*'Aqīda al-Wāsiṭiyya* by Ibn Taymiya and al-*'Aqīda al-Taḥāwiyya* by Abū Ja'far al-Taḥāwī. For full details on this issue and the opinions of different scholars on what causes apostasy and the conditions of that, see, e.g., 'Abd Allāh al-Atharī, *Al-Īmān, Ḥaqīqatuh, Khawārimuh, Nawāqiduh 'inda Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a* (Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan li al-Nashr, 2003), 108 ff.

⁵⁵² Muslim scholars opine that when a Muslim commits a sin that may cause apostasy, such a person would be considered apostate only if he considers that sin lawful (*istiḥlāl*) or if he denies a clear-cut ruling of God (*jaḥd*) in this regard. However, if such a person says or does that sin while acknowledging that it is wrong and that he is disobeying the command of God, this will be considered a sin that will not constitute disbelief or apostasy. See more examples of this view in Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 504-6. See also more details in Al-Atharī, *Al-Īmān*, 123-30.

of the ruling of God (*jaḥd*). In this regard, he criticised Abū Ja'far al-Ṭaḥāwī, author of the most famous book of creed *al-'Aqīda al-Ṭaḥāwīyya*, for saying that sins committed by believers does not render them apostates unless they consider these sins to be lawful (*istiḥlāl*) or deny that these are prohibited (*jaḥd*).⁵⁵³

Faḍl classifies sins into two categories. The first is what automatically causes apostasy, such as abandonment of prayer and ruling with other than what God has ordained (breach of *ḥākimiyya*). Committing such a kind of sin is enough, according to Faḍl, to issue *takfīr* without conditioning *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl*. The second category includes normal sins such as fornication or theft. In this category *Jaḥd and Istiḥlāl* would be required to issue *takfīr*.⁵⁵⁴

Moreover, Faḍl not only removed the extant constraints on his most influential tools of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* by cancelling the conditions of *jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl* in case of breaching *ḥākimiyya* but also tried to constraint possible counter-framing and deterred his opponents by extending his serious tool of *takfīr* to those who oppose his view in this regard, "Whoever considers these (*jaḥd and istiḥlāl*) as conditions is trying to correct God; rather he is denying the words of God which indicate the *kufr* of the person who did such acts, and a person who denies the words of God is a disbeliever."⁵⁵⁵ By accusing those who oppose his view of denying the words of God, Faḍl is practically equating his own interpretation to the words of God, which stems from his belief that his is the only valid interpretation, and therefore whoever rejects it would be a disbeliever for rejecting the command of God.

Likewise, Faḍl tried to constrain other opposing views that might hinder application of apostasy to rulers and their supporters when he criticised other prominent scholars' differentiation between the *kufr* of practice (*al-kufr al-'amalī*) which does not render its doer an apostate and the *kufr* of belief (*al-kufr al-i'tiqādī*) which constitutes apostasy. Those whom he criticised include the most famous classical and modern figures of Salafism such as Ibn Taymiya, Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Bāz, Ibn al-'Uthaymīn and others. For example, he criticised Ibn al-Qayyim for dividing *kufr* into *kufr* of practice and *kufr* of belief and for considering neglect of prayer and ruling with other than the laws of God to be among the *kufr* of practice. Similarly, Faḍl further

⁵⁵³ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 504-6.

⁵⁵⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 504.

⁵⁵⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 519.

introduced other rules which have extremely serious implications on Muslim communities at large.

He argued that every term of *kufṛ* preceded by the Arabic definite article (al) indicates major disbelief. Also any mention of the word *kufṛ* in the Quran indicates major disbelief; and in the Sunna of the Prophet, any mention of *kufṛ* with (al) is major disbelief and without (al) should to be interpreted as a major disbelief unless there is a sign to indicate otherwise. Among the new rules of *takfīr* is that a man enters Islam with several things but only one act or saying of disbelief drives one out of Islam.⁵⁵⁶ Thus, though Faḍl drew mainly on Salafi literature and approaches, he broke with the Salafi scholars on issues of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* to lift constraints on his major frames, which made him take stances that were considered by Salafi Jihadists themselves to be too extreme.

Faḍl justifies his expansion on *takfīr* and *ḥākimiyya* by arguing that the issue of belief and disbelief is the most important issue in the religion and that it is vital for the Muslim to know if he is apostate or not so he can save himself before it is too late. So, it leads to salvation. All of the above arguments and judgments, Faḍl notes, are in order for everyone to plainly know those who are 'saved' and those who are 'doomed'. By this, Faḍl is applying another frame alignment strategy known as 'frame extension' in which specific frames are portrayed as extending beyond their primary interests to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be of importance to potential adherent.⁵⁵⁷ In fact this excessive form of *takfīr* is largely motivated by Faḍl's conception of the 'saved sect' which is a commonly known concept among Salafi sects in general and Salafi Jihadists in particular.

Faḍl's obsession with the concept of the 'saved sect' (*al-firqa al-nājiyya*) or the '[divinely] supported denomination' (*al-ṭā'ifa al-manṣūra*)⁵⁵⁸ made him go as far as excluding any person

⁵⁵⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 550-6.

⁵⁵⁷ For more details on this framing strategy, see Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 625.

⁵⁵⁸ These concepts are based mainly on the Prophetic *ḥadīth* which indicates that the Prophet's Ummah will be divided into seventy-three sects and only one of these sects will be saved from Hellfire, which is the *Jamā'a* (the Group). In another narration, the Prophet adds, "Every one of these sects will be in the Hellfire, except for the one which follows that which I and my companions are upon." This *ḥadīth* is related by Al-Tirmidhī (5/62) and Al-Ḥākim (1/128). Almost each Muslim group or sect considers itself to be this supported or saved sect while others are not, but the concept is more present among the Salafi groups in general and Salafi Jihadists in particular. The supported denomination is also based on the Prophetic *ḥadīth*, "A denomination of my Ummah will continue to support the truth, unharmed by those who oppose them until the Day of Judgement." Though most of Muslim scholars opine that the saved sect is the same as the Supported Denomination, Faḍl argues that the latter is a branch of the former and

from salvation if he or she fails to achieve the criteria he set for the members of that sect. With Faḍl, this exclusionist approach took a *takfīrī* shape. As the framing of *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr*, and the concept of the 'saved sect' dominated Faḍl's writings before revisions, he looked like a prosecutor, seeking evidence to depict the individuals and the society with disbelief. In this way, the *takfīr*, became applicable to both sovereign leaders and those who assist them, as well as large sections of the Muslim community.⁵⁵⁹ Nonetheless, Faḍl did not stop at this point of *takfīr* but rather declared that all the members of *al-ṭā'ifa al-mumtani'a* are apostate without the need for further investigation.

Before Revisions: *Al-Ṭā'ifa al-Mumtani'a* (The Abstaining Group)

Al-ṭā'ifa al-mumtani'a refers to those (individuals or groups) that abstain from adhering to the Sharia and some of its associated mandatory observances. It could also refer to a group that refrains, by its power and authority, from coming under the control of the Muslim state where it lives. Muslim scholars such as Ibn Taymiya, Ibn Ḥanbal⁵⁶⁰ (d. 855) and others have opined that the Muslim state has to fight such a group until it observes the rite which it has stopped practicing.⁵⁶¹ Though the concept of the refraining group refers to a group which challenges the Muslim state's authority of implementing the rites of the Islamic Sharia and therefore they are to be fought by the state itself, Jihadists reverse the order and consider the state to be a 'group' and put themselves in place of the state.

Many Jihadists consider rulers, who are the heads of this group, apostate along with their main government figures such as ministers, being members of this refraining group. However, Faḍl, had a more radical view by widening the scope of the refraining group to include not only rulers and their ministers but also all of the above categories such as members of the parliament and those who elect them, judges, lawyers, police officers and soldiers as well as anyone who works

that the latter refers to the *mujāhidūn* who fight for Islam. He further opined that the most important duty of the members of the Supported Denomination is fighting the apostate rulers. See Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 87-9.

⁵⁵⁹ Markaz al-Dirāsāt, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 339; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 11.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibn Taymiya and Ibn Ḥanbal are given as examples here, though this view is not exclusive to them, because Jihadists and Salafis in general follow their opinions and hold them in the highest esteem.

⁵⁶¹ See, for example, Muḥammad b. 'ee, al-Ḥanbalī al-Ba'ī, *Mukhtaṣar al-Fatāwā al-Miṣriyya li Ibn Taymiya*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiḳī (Dammam, Saudi Arabia: Dār Ibn al-Qayyim, 1986), 1: 458; Ḥusayn b. 'Ūda al-'Awāysha, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiḳhiyya al-Muyassara fī Fiḳh al-Kitāb wa al-Sunna al-Muṭahhara* (Amman, Jordan: Al-Maktaba al-Islāmiyya, 1423 A H), 7: 287.

in a position that supports those rulers or serves any of their institutions, as a result of their violation of the *ḥākimiyya* of God.

Faḍl even went even further and issued *takfīr* against each individual member of these sectors in person without considering the fulfilment of the conditions and the absence of impediments. He dismissed these conditions because of Jihadists' inability to bring members of the refraining group under control and punish them, i.e. because members of the refraining group have positions of power and authority which make Jihadists incapable of making sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments, not to mention punishing them for their apostasy.⁵⁶² By setting these new rules, Faḍl opposes not only the general Sunni stream of *Fiqh* on this issue but also Jihadists themselves.

Though Jihadists consider the reframing group to be apostate, they issue that ruling on the general theoretical level, but they refrain from considering each individual member of this group an actual apostate. They refrain from doing so because naming an individual as apostate (*Takfīr al-mu'ayyan*) requires the presence of several conditions and the absence of many impediments, and Jihadists cannot make sure of the presence of these conditions and absence of these impediments with respect to each individual member of the refraining group. This is known as judging the 'act' and not the doer of the act, i.e., considering the act or saying as causing *kufr* or apostasy, without extending this ruling of apostasy to the person who committed that act or saying. Therefore, Jihadists name only rulers as apostates in person but not the individual members of the refraining group.⁵⁶³

Faḍl further argued that as helpers of those rulers observe the practices of the Islamic Sharia such as prayer, zakat and fasting, they are considered apostate apparently in the matters related to this world but not in the matters related to the Hereafter because of the inability to make sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments. He further stated that each Muslim should deal with each of the members of the refraining group based on his/ her own knowledge of their affairs. So a Muslim may deal with one of the members as an apostate while another Muslim may deal with the same member as a believer.⁵⁶⁴ The implication of that is very serious as giving individuals the freedom to treat others as apostate constitutes an implicit

⁵⁶² Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 673-6.

⁵⁶³ An example of this is the IG whose stance on this issue will be explained in detail in chapter 5.

⁵⁶⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 673 ff.

permission for those individuals to violate the life and property of those who are considered apostate.

Faḍl's main evidence in this regard is what he considers the decisive consensus (*ijmā' qaṭ'i*) of the companions of Prophet Muhammad on the apostasy of every individual member of those who believed in the prophethood of Musaylima and Tulayḥa.⁵⁶⁵ The Prophet's companions reached that consensus, Faḍl argued, when the Caliph Abū Bakr asked those who repented among the members of this refraining group to accept that those who died among them would go to the Hellfire. The rest of the companions did not object to the saying of Abū Bakr, and that was why this was counted as decisive consensus by the companions that every individual member of those who died would go to the Hellfire. According to Faḍl, because it is clear that the dead are individuals and it is also known that scholars of Ahl al-Sunna do not testify that a specific individual will be in the Hellfire unless that individual is certainly a disbeliever, this is a proof that the companions agreed that every individual member of the refraining group is an apostate in person.

This, Faḍl argues, is a clear text and a decisive consensus from the Prophet's companions that each individual of those people is apostate without considering fulfilment of the condition and absence of impediments which do not have to be checked when the apostates are too powerful to be brought under control. Faḍl further considered the 'consensus of the companions' in this regard to be very clear and indicative in a way that makes it decisive, and 'whoever rejects a decisive consensus of the companions becomes an apostate'.⁵⁶⁶ Faḍl then transferred the ruling of the apostates at the time of Abū Bakr to the supporters of current rulers. So, every individual person of those who fight with the apostate rulers or support them with words or actions is a disbeliever without the need to verify the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments.⁵⁶⁷

If this is taken as an example to evaluate Faḍl's approach, it becomes clear that because of his understanding of *ḥākimiyya*, Faḍl practised too much constraint lifting and frame alignment

⁵⁶⁵ These are the names of two persons who claimed to be prophets during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad, but they gained more followers greater powers only after the Prophet died and that is why the Prophet's companions fought them. For full details, see Abū al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī, *Al-Muntaẓam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1992), 4: 18-25.

⁵⁶⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 674.

⁵⁶⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 686.

strategies to the extent that he depicted large sections of the Muslim community as disbelievers. This approach affects not only members of what he considers a refraining group but also those who disagree with his deductions in this regard. Faḍl's concern for *ḥākimiyya* made him go as far as driving millions of Muslims nowadays outside the fold of Islam. He amplified a single saying of Abū Bakr to the status of 'consensus' as it has not been challenged by other companions, which means they approved of what Abū Bakr said. Then he escalated this kind of consensus to be so clear and decisive that the acceptance of which as a Sharia proof becomes compulsory and the denial of which becomes equal to the denial of a Sharia decisive text which renders the deniers apostates.

Faḍl's claim of *ijmā'* can be easily challenged by the fact that there is no consensus on what *ijmā'* is and who needs to be in agreement. In addition, only a few companions were present and their non-objection could not be considered *ijmā'* as the definition of *ijmā'* that is accepted by the majority of Muslim scholars is: the agreement on a particular point of all of the *mujtahid* scholars of all the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad in a specific age after Prophet Muhammad's death.⁵⁶⁸ Only some and not all of the companions were attendant when Abū Bakr said this phrase which the author used to claim *ijmā'*. Because of his 'excessive' *takfīrī* approach, Faḍl was severely criticised on this issue even by Jihadists themselves such as the Jordanian renowned jihadi ideologue 'Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī and the jihadi sheikh and activist Ḥasan Qā'id (aka Abū Yaḥyā al-Lībī).

For example, the Jihadist Sheikh Ḥasan Qā'id responded in detail to Faḍl's claims in this regard arguing that that the *ijmā'* claimed by Faḍl cannot be considered *qaṭ'i* as the *qaṭ'i ijmā'* must be expressed by all *mujtahids* verbally or expressed by some of them and practiced by the rest. The silent *ijmā'* (the one that has been expressed by some *mujtahids* while the others kept silent without showing objections or approval) as in this case, is classified, according to the preponderant opinion, as non-decisive, for the decisive is what is expressed or practiced clearly by all the *mujtahids*. Some scholars even argued that silent *ijmā'* cannot be considered acceptable *ijmā'*.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁸ See, e.g., Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī, *Irshād al-Fuḥūl ilā Taḥqīq al-Ḥaqq min 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, ed., Aḥmad 'Ināya (Damascus: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1250 AH), 132.

⁵⁶⁹ For all of these opinions and for a detailed reply to Faḍl on this issue, see Ḥasan Qā'id, "Naẓarāt fī al-Ijmā' al-Qaṭ'i," (N.P., Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād: <http://www.tawhed.ws>, N.D [downloaded 13 August 2012]).

He further argued that even if this was an *ijmā' qat'i*, transferring the ruling from this incident to the supporters of the current rulers would be through *qiyās* (analogy) which is by no means a decisive Sharia proof and is even unacceptable to some scholars, such as Ibn Ḥazm, as one of the sources of arriving at rulings in the Sharia. In addition, using *qiyās* here requires full agreement between the two cases in terms of the conditions that lead to giving the ruling of the old case to the new incident. However, this is not the case here as there are several differences between the two parties of *qiyās*.

In the incident that happened at the time of Abū Bakr, the followers of Musaylima and Ṭulayḥa were considered apostates as they denied the prophethood of Prophet Muḥammad and believed that someone else was a prophet or was a partner of prophethood with Prophet Muhammad, which constituted a denial of a huge number of decisive Sharia texts from the Quran and the Sunna regarding this issue in addition to their undermining of the whole Islamic religion by denying its Prophet. Supporters of current rulers do not deny any text in the Quran but they rather declare their belief in Prophet Muhammad alone as the last Prophet of God. So the two cases are too different for analogy to work properly.⁵⁷⁰

Thus, what made Faḍl arrive at this conclusion and go to this extreme way of interpretation is his understanding and interpretation of *ḥākimiyya* where he considers any breach, even if indirect, of *ḥākimiyya* an act of apostasy, which made him lift any constraints in this regard and drove him directly to the conclusion that those people were apostate without the need for fulfilment of conditions or absence of impediments in the same way followers of the two false prophets were. This shows how Faḍl's concern for *ḥākimiyya* could lead him to amplification of such extremely dangerous judgments that affect millions of Muslims worldwide. Moreover, Faḍl's concern for *ḥākimiyya* was further amplified by considering all Muslim countries to be lands of disbelief because of their violation of *ḥākimiyya*.

Before Revisions: *Dār al-Islām wa Dār al-Kufr* (Land of Islam and Land of Disbelief)

Dār al-Islām wa Dār al-Kufr (Abode of Islam and abode of disbelief) is a classification used in the classical books of *Fiqh* to differentiate between Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries based on the majority of each country's population. However, Faḍl uses the concept as a

⁵⁷⁰ For more replies and refutations of Faḍl's argument in this regard, See Qā'id, "Naẓarāt fī al-Ijmā' al-Qaṭ'i."

ḥākimiyya-related frame and therefore he divides lands as per the kinds of laws dominating them not according to the majority of their population. As per his understanding of *ḥākimiyya*, Faḍl sees that Muslim countries nowadays are lands of disbelief because they are ruled by positive laws of disbelief. He argues that the number of population and practicing Islamic rites in a specific country are irrelevant to its classification as a land of Islam or a land of disbelief, and therefore he refuses classifying lands on any basis other than that of the laws governing them (*ḥākimiyya*).⁵⁷¹ He classifies lands into more detailed sub-categories and he classifies Muslim countries nowadays in the category of 'lands of apostasy' (*Diyār ridda*) He defines these lands as the lands that used to be lands of Islam but have been dominated by apostates who have applied laws of disbelievers therein.

An example of these lands, Faḍl notes, is the so-called Islamic countries nowadays, including all Arab countries. He emphasises, ".... I draw the attention here to the fact that I always describe these lands in my writings as 'Lands of Muslims' with view to the majority of their population. However, this term is not equal to the term 'lands of Islam' as these lands are in fact lands of disbelief and apostasy, and launching jihad against its apostate rulers is an individual obligation on its Muslim residents."⁵⁷² By this, Faḍl disregards the fact that the majority of laws in these lands are in line with the Islamic Sharia, and considers the application of a few laws that contradict the Sharia to be a neglect of the whole of the Islamic Sharia. This is based on Faḍl's view that neglecting even a single issue of the Sharia is equal to neglecting the entire Sharia, which also branches from his conception of *ḥākimiyya*. Perhaps, Faḍl's view of Muslim countries as abodes of apostasy is what made him feel that the whole of Islam is endangered as there is no longer any abode of Islam on the face of earth, which has greatly influenced his views not only on *takfīr* but also on what is known as *tatarrus* (human shield) where killing Muslims taken as human shield is allowed under certain conditions.

Before Revisions: *Tatarrus* (Human Shield)

Tatarrus refers to the case when some Muslims are taken as human shields by non-Muslims in a war between two armies. Modern and pre-modern Muslim jurists⁵⁷³ discussed this case and said

⁵⁷¹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 640-4.

⁵⁷² Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 545; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 41.

⁵⁷³ For details and elaborations of scholars' opinions on this issue, see, e.g., Wizarat al-Awqāf, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiqhiyya al-Kuwaytiyya*, 4: 216 ff.

that it would be allowed to attack the Muslim shield only if the Muslim army and the human shield will be destroyed if the shield is not attacked. Yet, Jihadists broaden the scope of the term to include Muslims who exist accidentally at the time of Jihadists' attacks on 'disbelievers' whom they consider legitimate targets. Basically, this stems from their broader conception of jihad as they consider these attacks to be 'jihad' and therefore whatever applies to jihad applies to these attacks.

Thus, as the *tatarrus* frame is employed by Jihadists to legitimise and justify the killing of innocent Muslims during attacks on what Jihadists consider legitimate targets, Faḍl framed it in a way that allows attacking the Muslim shield even if there is no fear on the Muslim army and even when it is Muslims who take the lead and attack 'disbelievers' while some innocent Muslims exist accidentally at the time of Muslim attacks on the disbelievers (offensive operations). This also applies even if Muslims are not taken as human shields. Faḍl framed it in this way to allow Muslims (here Jihadists) to defend the *ḥākimiyya* of God by attacking apostate rulers and their supporters even if this involves killing some innocent Muslims. "Killing such a Muslim shield is not more sorrowful than killing the Muslim fighters by disbelievers during fighting," Faḍl argues.⁵⁷⁴

He further asserted that this does not mean that Muslims are violable but it means that it is allowed to kill them while attacking the disbelievers if there is a religious benefit from that. In response to the hypothetical question of: if there is no fear on the Muslim fighters, what religious benefit would be more important than lives of Muslims? The answer was '*ḥākimiyya*'. There is no doubt, Faḍl adds, that the harm afflicting Muslim from the dominance of apostate rulers is much graver than the harm of killing some Muslims while fighting the enemy. Muslim countries are running towards comprehensive disbelief and apostasy. What harm is graver than this? Based on the juristic principle of giving priority to preserving the religion over preserving life and based on the rule of choosing the lesser harm, it would be permissible to kill some Muslims for a greater cause which is protecting the religion from the disbelief and apostasy of those rulers.⁵⁷⁵ This again branches from and is justified by Faḍl's conception of *ḥākimiyya*. This together with the previous views explained above show that Faḍl is unwilling to compromise when it comes to *ḥākimiyya* and would lift any constraint that would hinder the application of

⁵⁷⁴ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 282.

⁵⁷⁵ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 285-6.

his view on *ḥākimiyya*, to the extent that he would allow killing large number of innocent Muslims for that reason.

Faḍl has also counter-framed opponent's critique by criticising those who say that disbelievers must be distinct from Muslims in order for Muslim fighters to attack the disbelievers. He has mentioned his rivals' evidence in this regard which is verse 25 chapter 48 of the Quran. In this verse, God told Muslims that they were not allowed to fight on the Day of al-Ḥudaybiya when they were prevented by the pagans of Mecca from performing pilgrimage because there were Muslims amongst the disbelievers. Had Muslims fought disbelievers at that time, they could have killed other Muslims who concealed their faith and that was why God prevented Muslims from fighting. Faḍl considered the argument of those who ban killing Muslims because of this verse to be a misconception as, according to Faḍl, this verse is speaking about this occasion only and cannot be extended to other occasions for this will cause the cease of jihad because all countries nowadays have Muslims mixed with non-Muslims.

If Faḍl's argument in this regard is compared with his argument against the specificity of the main verse of *ḥākimiyya*, Faḍl's selective and justificatory approach will come clearer. Though Faḍl acknowledged that many of the companions of the Prophet opined that the relevant part of the main verse of *ḥākimiyya* [Quran 5: 44] was revealed regarding the Jews as the whole verse is speaking about the Jews, he insisted that apostate rulers must be included in that verse because the juristic rule states that what is considered is the general applicability of the text rather than the specificity of the occasion regarding which this text was revealed.⁵⁷⁶ However, when this rule did not help his framing on *tatarrus*, he argued that the verse prohibiting fighting non-Muslims if Muslims would be included in the attack is specific to a single occasion and cannot be generalised. The above attempts of Faḍl to remove any obstacles that might bar his view on rebellion as shown in his arguments on *tatarrus* and *takfīr* fall within the framing strategy of constraint-lifting, a strategy whereby Faḍl tried to lift constraints on the prognostic framing of rebellion that is seen by him as the only valid way to deal with those who violate God's sovereignty. This is also what he did by lifting the constraint of 'excuse due to ignorance' that constrains applying his rules of *takfīr*.

⁵⁷⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 962-4.

Before Revisions: *Al-'Udhr bi al-Jahl* (Excuse due to Ignorance)⁵⁷⁷

Ignorance relates to *takfīr* as one of the impediments (constraints) that could prevent issuing a judgment of *takfīr* against others if they ignorantly commit an act of disbelief. In this regard, Faḍl agrees with other Muslim scholars that a Muslim who ignorantly commits an act of disbelief cannot be considered disbeliever until he is informed of his *kufṛ* and the truth is made clear to him (*iqāmat al-hujja*). However, what is different in Faḍl's argument is that he considers that the truth would be considered clear not when the person who committed the act of disbelief is informed of it, but when he is able to look for it. Thus, as a constraint-lifting strategy, Faḍl's argument is that if a person can find the truth but he has not tried to look for it, his excuse of ignorance will not be accepted and he will be considered *kāfir*. As it is easy, Faḍl adds, to find the truth in Muslim countries nowadays through travel or by asking people of knowledge through the phone or mail, there is no acceptable excuse of ignorance in such countries except in extremely vague matters of religion that are recognised only by specialist scholars.⁵⁷⁸ Thus, though Faḍl in theory accepts *al-'udhr bi al-jahl*, he annuls it in practice by considering ignorance in Muslim countries unjustifiable and thus unacceptable and by arguing that knowing the truth takes force by having the ability to look for it not by the fact that it reaches the person who committed the act of disbelief. By so doing, Faḍl has removed another constraint that could have prevented him from issuing *takfīr* against this huge number of Muslims, which further proves his excessive *takfīrī* tendencies that stem from his conception of *ḥākimiyya*.

In fact, Faḍl is not in real need of this argument on excuse due to ignorance as he has already established before that members of the refraining group (anyone who directly or indirectly helps apostate rulers) are automatically rendered apostate without the need to check the fulfillment of conditions and absence of impediments. As excuse due to ignorance is one of the impediments, speaking about it is not very important as, according to Faḍl's argument on the refraining group, it does not have to be checked in the first place when it comes to helpers of apostate rulers. However, speaking about it here could help in other cases that apostatise because of their breach of *ḥākimiyya* without being helpers of rulers. Only in such a case, they will not be considered a refraining group and fulfillment of conditions and absence of impediments will have to be checked.

⁵⁷⁷ This concept has been explained in chapter 2.

⁵⁷⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 469-71

These are the matters that are exclusively related to the main frames of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* and affect only Muslim communities. The following frames, except *ḥisba*, are also related by Faḍl to *ḥākimiyya* in one way or another but they also have another function and have influence on non-Muslims. These are categorised, as mentioned in the introduction, firstly according to their proximity to *ḥākimiyya* and secondly according to their influence on local and then foreign non-Muslims.

Before Revisions: People of *Dhimma* (Non-Muslim Residents of Muslim lands)

Dhimmīs are non-Muslims (Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians) living permanently in Muslim lands under a permanent covenant of protection.⁵⁷⁹ According to this covenant, they pay *jizya* (a yearly sum of money paid by the adults among them to the Muslim state in return for protection) and abide by rulings of Islam as they reside in lands where rulings of Islam are applied.⁵⁸⁰ In *al-Jāmi'* Faḍl framed in this concept to express his views on Muslim relationship with non-Muslims living in Muslim countries and the criteria governing dealing with them. As with the previous concepts, he linked this topic to his central frame of *ḥākimiyya*, noting that governing with laws other than those of God is what prompted him to speak about rulings of *Dhimmīs* as both topics are related. This means that he classifies this as a top important issue because it relates to the most important issue of *ḥākimiyya* which is 'the core of *tawḥīd*'. It relates to *ḥākimiyya* as the rulings governing Muslims' relationship with those people have been dropped as a result of abandoning the rulings of the Sharia. In this regard, Faḍl has counter-framed opponents' views by criticising some modern Muslim writers such as Subḥī al-Ṣāliḥ and Muḥammad Ḥumaydullāh, who have changed these rules "under the pretext of renewing Islamic thought or tolerance and peaceful coexistence with others."⁵⁸¹

The details of the covenant of *dhimma* are known as the "Umarī conditions" as it was the second Muslim caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who first contracted these conditions. Faḍl has counted these conditions and added that paying the *jizya* and accepting Islamic laws are the most important of these conditions though they are not mentioned in the 'Umarī conditions. Therefore, dropping the *jizya* and cancelling the 'Umarī conditions means that *Dhimmīs* have broken the covenant of

⁵⁷⁹ Wizarat al-Awqāf, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiqhiyya*, 7: 141; Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1055. For more details on that concept, see Mahmoud Ayoub, "Dhimma in Qur'an and Hadith," in Robert Hoyland, ed., *Muslims and Others in Early Islamic Society* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 25-36.

⁵⁸⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1055.

⁵⁸¹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1055.

dhimma and have become like other combatant disbelievers. Faḍl insists that this applies whether it is *Dhimmīs* who broke the covenant or it is the apostate rulers who dropped the conditions of *dhimma*. In either case, it means that the conditions of *dhimma* have been broken and *Dhimmīs* are no longer abiding by the covenant of *dhimma*, which makes them violable. Faḍl further argues that even if it is the ruler who has dropped the conditions as a consequence of the non-implementation of the Sharia, the Christians of Egypt, for example, have welcomed this and have tried to resist any call for the application of the Sharia or restoration of the conditions of *dhimma*. He has counted some examples on this and has concluded that the concept of *Ahl al-Dhimma* no longer exists on earth nowadays as the conditions of *dhimma* are no longer applied anywhere in the world.⁵⁸²

One of the common mistakes of contemporary Muslim writers, Faḍl notes, is that they consider People of the Book in Muslims' lands nowadays as *Dhimmīs*, which is completely wrong as their conditions nowadays are completely different from the conditions applied by Muslims to *Dhimmīs*.⁵⁸³ As rulings of *dhimma* are to be applied on non-Muslims in lands of Islam, Faḍl did not justify why he would expect *Dhimmīs* to apply the rulings of the Sharia in countries that he considers lands of apostasy and disbelief. Furthermore, his observation that these conditions are unchangeable and inadaptable means that they must be applied exactly as they were applied by early Muslim generations, without any consideration to the change of times and circumstances. This again branches from his static view on *ḥākimiyya* and whatever relates to it.

Therefore, Faḍl has further criticised and accused of disbelief those who say that these conditions are not binding on Muslims, emphasising that they are binding because they are a Sunna of a Rightly Guided Caliph (*Khalīfa Rāshid*) and are further supported by the consensus of the companions of the Prophet. However, Faḍl notes that these conditions are binding only when Muslims are powerful and have the upper hand. In case of weakness or incapacity, Muslims are not asked to compel people of the Book to commit to these conditions. Yet, no other conditions contradictory to the Sharia and *ḥākimiyya*, such as principles of nationalism or citizenship, may be applied as this will take those who laid these conditions to the circle of

⁵⁸² Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1056-9.

⁵⁸³ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1062.

disbelief. So whoever calls for dropping the conditions of *dhimma* and adopting the principle of citizenship in lands of Islam is 'apostate'.⁵⁸⁴

By declaring so, Faḍl has again re-emphasised that what matters of the conditions of *dhimma* is what relates to the application of the Sharia (*ḥākimiyya*) i.e., the theoretical aspect that pertains to the texts of the Sharia. However, he is flexible on the practical implementation (the practical aspect) of these conditions when Muslims are weak and incapable of imposing these conditions. Again this shows that Faḍl is strict when it comes to the issue of *ḥākimiyya* but can be flexible when it comes to some practical matters (application of some conditions) when incapacity hinders Muslims from imposing them. While the concept of *dhimma* has influence on local non-Muslim citizens of Muslim countries, the concept of *amān* has influence on foreign non-Muslims coming to Muslim lands in addition to an influence on non-Muslim countries who give visas to Muslims.

Before Revisions: *Amān* (Covenant of Security)

Amān is a term used in Islamic jurisprudence to indicate a covenant of security and protection between a Muslim and a non-Muslim whereby one of the two parties is given assurance of being secure and unharmed when they visit or live in the area or country of the other party.⁵⁸⁵ The concept is used by Jihadists to frame and justify violence against non-Muslim foreigners who come to Muslim countries, under the pretext that they do not have a valid *amān*. It is also used in the argument and framing on whether or not a visa given by non-Muslim countries to a Muslim is considered *amān* that prevents that Muslim from attacking or harming citizens of that country. In this regard, Faḍl sees that when a Muslim is given *amān* by a non-Muslim, that Muslim has to respect that *amān* and avoid any breach of the *amān* and any treachery. He must not cause any harm to that non-Muslim or to those living with him in the same country as he has been given the *amān* based on these principles. This is because God asks Muslims to fulfill their promises and because treachery is not allowed in Islam. Visas given by countries of original disbelievers (countries that were never ruled by Muslims), Faḍl argues, are considered valid *amān* since they respect Muslims and protect them from harm and abuse as they do with their

⁵⁸⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1056-8& 1062.

⁵⁸⁵ For more information on this concept, see Hasan S Khalilieh, "Amān," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Three, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, eds. (Brill Online: http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/aman-SIM_0048 [22 December 2012]).

citizens. So Muslims who enter their countries must treat them equally even if they enter therein with a fake visa that the authorities of these countries thought to be genuine.⁵⁸⁶

On the other hand, Faḍl views that once a Muslim gives *amān* to someone, the person who is given *amān* enjoys all the privileges of security granted by the covenant. However, as Faḍl sees that rulers and governments of Muslim countries are apostates because of *ḥākimiyya*, he argues that their *amān* is of no value as the acceptable *amān* must be given by a Muslim whereas these rulers and their employees are not. So, the visa given to non-Muslims by the apostate ruling regimes does not lay any obligation of *amān* on Muslims. However, if a non-Muslim is invited by another Muslim, even if wrongdoer, this will be considered valid *amān* and it becomes binding on all Muslims to respect that *amān*.⁵⁸⁷

Faḍl's argument on the prohibition of causing harm to non-Muslims if a Muslim is granted a visa by non-Muslims generally conforms to the arguments of other Muslim scholars, as *amān* in this case does not relate to *ḥākimiyya*. However, when it relates to *ḥākimiyya*, which is, in this case, the *amān* given by 'apostate' regimes, he considers that *amān* does not take effect and thus a Muslim can violate the life of a non-Muslim as the *amān* is given by someone who apostatised due to violation of *ḥākimiyya*. In this regard, Faḍl gave priority to the implications of his conception of *ḥākimiyya* not only over the safety of the innocent people whose lives could be endangered by this verdict but also over other Islamic instructions that urge Muslims to treat others kindly. This clearly shows how he is unwilling to compromise when it comes to *ḥākimiyya*.

Faḍl also did not consider the practical fact that the only legal way for foreigners to enter a Muslim country would be through a visa from the government that he considered apostate. Though he has stated that if a non-Muslim enters Muslim countries with invitation from a Muslim, this should be considered a valid *amān*, Faḍl has not given any clues of how can people know that the foreigner coming to Muslim lands was invited by a Muslim or not and has not considered that this could have extremely serious implications on the lives and safety of foreigners who cannot enter a Muslim country except through a visa from a governing authorities. This further confirms the point that the frame of *ḥākimiyya* dominates Faḍl in

⁵⁸⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 653-4.

⁵⁸⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 653.

almost all of his arguments and that he is unwilling to compromise, irrespective of the consequences, when it comes to anything related to *ḥākimiyya*.

Before Revisions: Al-Walā' wa al-Barā'

Al-Walā' means love, allegiance and loyalty to the believers and *al-Barā'* means disassociation from the disbelievers. Jihadists frame in the concepts of *al-Walā' wa al-Barā'* as another tool, after *ḥākimiyya*, to prove the apostasy of rulers and their regimes as they show *walā'* to disbelievers. It is also used by Jihadists to frame their relation with non-Muslims and justify hatred, animosity and violence against them. Faḍl notes that it is a duty upon Muslims to declare his *barā'* from the disbelievers during their life and after their death. A Muslim's *barā'* from the disbelievers in their lives means animosity and hatred to them and to their disbelief, as well as relinquishing their whims and approaches and avoiding socialising and mixing with them. *Barā'* after death occurs by not asking forgiveness for them, not allowing them to be buried with Muslims, not inheriting from or getting inherited by Muslims.⁵⁸⁸

In *al-Jāmi'*, Faḍl has reviewed the linguistic and religious meanings of the derivatives of the word *walā'* and has framed it in this way: *walā'* means showing support, agreement, following, obedience, affection and love, and that any of these qualities is considered *walā'*. Such *walā'* must be devoted only to God, His Messenger and the believers. Anyone who obeys, loves or supports the disbelievers is considered to have taken them as allies (*Walā'*) and whoever takes them as allies is committing disbelief even if this does not cause any harm to the believers. Such disbelief is further confirmed if it causes any harm to the believers.⁵⁸⁹

As with the previous concepts, Faḍl linked this to his main concern of *ḥākimiyya* when he emphasised that rulings of *walā'* and *barā'* not only apply to 'original disbelievers' but also to rulers who apostatised because of *ḥākimiyya*. Anyone who helps, verbally or in practice, those rulers is considered to have taken them allies and thus has apostatised because of *walā'* to the apostates who fight for the sake of *ṭāghūt* and act in animosity towards God and His Messenger.⁵⁹⁰ Thus, the concept of *al-walā' wa al-barā'* has been used by Faḍl as another tool of *takfīr* on the local scene (Christian minorities and rulers of Muslim countries) and international

⁵⁸⁸ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 255.

⁵⁸⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 679-81.

⁵⁹⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 681& 689-90.

scene (foreign non-Muslims or original disbelievers), which shaped and framed his worldview of the 'other'.

Before Revisions: Relationship with the 'Other'

Influenced by his framing of jihad, *dhimma* and *al-walā' wa al-barā'*, Faḍl had a very rigid worldview as he considered the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslim as that of war and fighting rather than that of peace and coexistence. This stems from his view of jihad as a criterion that governs the relationship between Muslims and others. Thus, considering jihad as a 'norm' (i.e., considering fighting non-Muslims as the default in Muslim/non-Muslim relations), Faḍl rejects peace and coexistence with non-Muslims except under necessity. He argues that the Muslim Ummah is originally an Ummah of jihad and that is why all of its policies and resources must be tailored to serve that cause (jihad). Based on this, the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is based on war. So, fighting is the norm and peace is the exception.

As long as Muslims are stronger than their enemies, there should be no peace, truce or treaties. Only when Muslims are weak can they resort to truce and peace treaties. Even in such cases, these truces or peace agreements must be limited with a specific timeframe and not open-ended as this will lead to the neglect of jihad. In addition, Faḍl's view of jihad and *al-walā' wa al-barā'* made him exclude any other form of coexistence and peacefulness based on any considerations other than those of religious ties. Faḍl stated that there should be no consideration for ties of citizenship or nationalism as they oppose the religious ties. The only acceptable tie is that of faith while other 'pagan' ties are valueless.⁵⁹¹

This relates to *ḥākimiyya* in the sense that jihad here is meant to implement the Islamic Sharia (*ḥākimiyya*) in the countries of original disbelievers after ousting the apostate rulers and seizing power in Muslim countries (the near enemy) to take them as a base for launching jihad against 'the far enemy'. These are the issues which together formed Faḍl's views of Muslim rulers and communities in addition to the 'other' non-Muslims.

The above review shows that almost all of Faḍl's framings are driven by his concern for *ḥākimiyya* and that he is unwilling to compromise in anything related to *ḥākimiyya*. However, he can be flexible with the practical side at times of weakness or incapacity as well as in the other

⁵⁹¹ Faḍl, *Al-'Umda*, 264-71.

few issues that he did not relate to *ḥākimiyya*. Despite its importance, *ḥisba* is an example of matters that Faḍl did not pay enough attention to (i.e., an example of the issues that he did not discuss thoroughly, but instead mentioned very briefly without delving into details) as they are not related to his main concern of *ḥākimiyya*.

Before Revisions: *Ḥisba* (Enjoining the Right and Forbidding the Wrong)

Ḥisba means enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong according to the principles of the Islamic Sharia. It could be made by words or by actions gently or violently if required according to some conditions and etiquettes. While acknowledging the importance of *ḥisba*, Faḍl spoke about *ḥisba* in general terms and highlighted its importance without mentioning any etiquettes or principles that govern the issue of *ḥisba*. He merely listed some sources that talk about *ḥisba* and referred his readers to these sources for more information on *ḥisba*.⁵⁹² This, when contrasted with his lengthy arguments and dedicated framing on *ḥākimiyya* and its related issues, proves that issues that are not related to *ḥākimiyya* such as *ḥisba* are not of major concern to him. It is only the IG which gave greater importance to *ḥisba* and used the concept to justify some acts of violence. Thus, though *ḥisba* is one of the concepts used by some Jihadists to practice some acts of violence, it is not part of Faḍl's pro-violence frames. Nonetheless, mentioning *ḥisba* here is necessary because it shows that Faḍl would extensively cover and argue on concepts of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* and what is related to them and would just hint to other issues that are not related to or influenced by *ḥākimiyya*.

Conclusion

The above demonstration shows how Faḍl was so concerned about *ḥākimiyya* that he related most of the other concepts to it, categorised people into rigid templates of belief and disbelief, drove millions of people outside the fold of Islam, and removed any constraints that would hinder him from using his most influential tool of *takfīr* to effect his only acceptable prognostic framing of rebellion. To put things in their right context, this worldview must not be interpreted away from the context of Faḍl's life. Faḍl not only failed to change the 'un-Islamic' reality and achieve the aspired community of believers, but also failed to achieve his aspirations at the personal and organisational level as he was further forced to resign from the leadership of al-

⁵⁹² Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 889-91.

Jihād Organisation after he had been the most obeyed and respected emir. The widespread corruption and injustices together with his nostalgic vision of an idealistic Muslim society drove him to classifying people into templates of good and evil to distinguish ideal believers who would be 'saved' from disbelievers who would be 'doomed', and casting charges of treachery and apostasy on whoever fails to achieve that idealistic form of life.⁵⁹³ Faḍl's nostalgia and failure to achieve his aspiration in the practical world made him flee this world into the realm of texts, where he surprisingly excels and finds his nostalgic aspirations. Therefore, in his book *al-Jāmi'*, he attempted to develop a work that was conclusive and representative; something that all believers should adhere to if they were to be counted among those who belong to the saved sect. Thus, *al-Jāmi'* - a work intended exclusively for the elite (not the masses) – may be depicted as the '*Fiqh* of necessity, exception and feeling of insecurity. It is not the normal *Fiqh* or principles that interact with people in their daily lives.⁵⁹⁴

Textually speaking, this chapter highlights and explains in detail the theological concepts employed by Jihadists in general and al-Jihād Organisation in particular (as presented by Faḍl) to frame and justify violence, with the aim of exploring and explaining the assumptions underpinning the theological process of justifying violence from Jihadists' perspective in general and from Faḍl's perspective in particular. The most important of these concepts are *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion against the rulers. The three concepts are interrelated for in order to justify rebellion, *takfīr* must be used, and *ḥākimiyya* is the main tool used to issue *takfīr*. Faḍl's conception and framing of *ḥākimiyya* led him to link the majority of other issues to it and conclude that contemporary social and political mechanisms such as democracy, working or voting for parliaments, working in the judiciary or giving any kind of help in running these processes contradict God's *ḥākimiyya*, and thus render whoever exercises them apostate. He also introduced new rules of *takfīr* and arrived at some new conclusions that included vast sections of the Muslim communities in the circle of disbelief, especially when he practically disabled the concept of 'excuse due to ignorance' that might prevent someone who committed

⁵⁹³ Many scholars of the relationship between religion and violence employ a crisis theory approach to understanding the link between Islam and violence. Ranstorp, for example, after stating that a survey of the major religious militant groups in existence worldwide in the early 1990s revealed that almost all experience a serious sense of crisis in their environment, he noted that perceptions of crisis engender a sense of besiegement that prompts a defensive reaction that may take shape in a religious form. The amorphous, ever-shifting external environment prompts some individuals to adopt a powerfully dualistic Manichean worldview, parsing societies and individuals into rigid templates of good and evil. See. e.g., Ranstorp, "Terrorism in the Name of Religion," 60.

⁵⁹⁴ On this, see Markaz al-Dirasāt, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 338; 'Abd al-Jawwād, "Sayyid Imām fī al-'Umda wal Jāmi';" Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 11

an act of disbelief from being considered a disbeliever. Faḍl's new deductions and conclusions were deemed too radical even by his fellow Jihadists.

Other concepts towards which Faḍl took very radical views because he saw them as being related to *ḥākimiyya* include: the refraining group, the abode of Islam and abode of disbelief, *tatarrus* or human shielding, and the concept of *dhimmah*. The discussion also covered some concepts which Faḍl partially related to *ḥākimiyya* such as the concepts of *amān* and *al-walā' wa al-barā'*, and showed that Faḍl would issue radical judgements whenever he linked any of these issues to *ḥākimiyya* while he was flexible on other practical issues such as *ḥisba*. These concepts together shaped Faḍl's antagonistic worldview towards the 'other'.

In framing terms, Faḍl linked almost all of his frames to his central frame of *ḥākimiyya* using the two basic interactive, discursive processes that generate collective action frames; i.e., frame articulation and frame amplification or elaboration.⁵⁹⁵ Frame articulation refers to connecting and aligning events, experiences and strands of moral codes in a way that makes them hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion.⁵⁹⁶ In this regard, Faḍl used frame articulation by connecting and aligning events and experiences (injustices) that Jihadists and Muslims in general face and making them hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion under the rubric of the religious moral code of *ḥākimiyya* and related concepts. Though theological issues discussed and presented by Faḍl are not new nor are the experiences and realities linked to them, he managed to give them a special novelty not so much through the originality or newness of its ideational elements, but through the manner in which he spliced them together and articulated them, in a way that granted them a new angle of vision, vantage point and interpretation through assembling, packaging and collating pieces of the observed, experienced and recorded 'reality', and linking them to the general frame of *ḥākimiyya*.

The frame amplification or elaboration process involves accenting and highlighting some events, issues, or beliefs as being more important than others.⁵⁹⁷ Faḍl attended to this process by highlighting and accenting the dogmatic issues of *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr*, jihad and their related elements as being more salient than others such as *ḥisba* and other *fiqh* issues. These punctuated or accented elements of *ḥākimiyya* served the whole articulation process of

⁵⁹⁵ For a general theoretical explanation of the above theoretical processes, see Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 130-2; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 623.

⁵⁹⁶ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 130.

⁵⁹⁷ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 130.

violence by providing a conceptual connection for linking together the various events and concepts. In other words, these punctuated issues, beliefs, and events functioned much like synecdoches, bringing into sharp relief and symbolising the larger frame of which it is a part. The group's slogans such as 'Rule of God, Rule of Islam, Golden Age, Implementation of Sharia, Restoration of Caliphate' illustrate this function as these slogans directly reflect and assign special emphasis to the articulated and amplified frames of *ḥākimiyya*, etc.

Thus, in addition to providing a detailed review of Faḍl's ideology before revisions, the main argument in this chapter is that the issue of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr* constitute Faḍl's major concern, central frame and most influential tool to justify violence, that his obsession with *ḥākimiyya* made him link the majority of other concepts to it, and that other *ḥākimiyya*-unrelated issues were of secondary importance to the overarching goal of the implementation of the Sharia. Therefore, this conclusion constitutes a necessary premise for the arguments in the next chapter as understanding the nature and degree of change in Faḍl's ideology in general can be judged and measured by the changes he presents in his new arguments regarding his main concern of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr*.

Chapter Four: Al-Jihād Organisation: Ideology after Revisions and Dynamics of Change

Introduction

After reviewing Faḍl's ideology before revisions in chapter 3 and establishing the fact that *ḥākimiyya* was his main concern and central frame that he would link most issues to, and that he would take radical views when it comes to anything related to *ḥākimiyya*; chapter 4 explains the new interpretations of the concepts that were used to justify violence as presented by Faḍl in his 'revisions' and shows how he framed them to argue against acts of violence. The final analysis in this chapter sheds light on Faḍl's approach and methodology; explains whether there is any change in the ideology and the extent of this change. It also explains the dynamics of change in Faḍl's ideology.

This chapter has two main sections and answers three basic questions. The first section answers the question: What are the new interpretations of the religious concepts upon which Faḍl framed his previous pro-violence ideology? This is answered by giving overviews of the interpretations of these concepts and how they are employed to stop violence, which will together offer a detailed description of Faḍl's ideology after revisions and how it is framed. This section also shows that Faḍl has employed Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*) to account for his new views and support his new arguments.

The second section answers two questions: Has Faḍl really changed his ideology and what is the degree of that change, if any? And how could Faḍl justify violence and non-violence based upon theological Islamic concepts either way? This will be achieved by analysing and explaining Faḍl's texts and arguments using textual analysis, coupled with the relevant framing aspects. These will be the main tools to analyse the tenets of Faḍl's ideology as presented in his literature.

Although Faḍl has resigned from al-Jihād Organisation and some of his views have been rejected by the Organisation and other Jihadists for being 'too radical', he remains in the eyes of Jihadists the principal, most respected and weighty ideologue of the Organisation and one of al-Qaeda's most respected jihadi scholars. Faḍl is still seen as a high profile scholar, his books are still held in the highest esteem by Jihadists and are still taught by jihadi groups worldwide.⁵⁹⁸ His previous

⁵⁹⁸ Nabīl Naṭīm, "Nabīl Naṭīm: Sayyid Imām huwa al-Munazzir al-Ḥaqīqī al-Ālamī li al-Jihādiyyīn," *Al-Arabiya.net*: www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/egypt/2013/08/13/النيل-نعيم-سيد-امام-هو-المُنظر-الحقيقي-العالمي-للجهاديين.html (last accessed 9 September 2016).

writings are still published on jihadi websites and taught in jihadi circles.⁵⁹⁹ Faḍl's radical views, in the sight of his own Organisation and other Jihadi scholars, are no more than minor mistakes that would never undermine the whole great contribution of Faḍl as a spectacular jihadi ideologue. This is expressed by Jihadists, such as Abu Muḥammad al-Maḳdisī and Ḥasan Qā'id (Abu Yaḥyā al-Lībī), who critiqued some points in Faḍl's *al-Jāmi'*.⁶⁰⁰ The same with Faḍl's own Organisation, they still hold his writings in the highest esteem but they have removed from them only the views that they considered 'too radical' and his critique of other jihadi movements such as the IG.

As discussed before, Faḍl has recorded his revisions in a book titled *Wathīqat Tarshīd al-'Amal al-Jihādī fī Miṣr Wa al-'Ālam* (Document of Right Guidance for Jihadi Activities in Egypt and the World). In this *Wathīqa* Faḍl argued against rebellion and condemned acts of violence in general using an *Uṣūlī*⁶⁰¹ approach, supporting his arguments with juristic proofs. However, he did not speak about all frames or concepts of violence he had previously discussed in his earlier works. He spoke only about some of what he covered in his pro-violence writings and some actions of other Jihadist movements, particularly al-Qaeda.⁶⁰² In addition, contrary to Faḍl's previous writings, many of the titles in his *Wathīqa* refer to the practical implications of the concepts of violence rather than the concepts themselves. For example, rather than titling an article in the *Wathīqa* 'amān' as he did in his pro-violence writings, Faḍl entitles it with one of the practical implications of the Jihadists' understanding of *amān* which is: 'Killing non-Muslim Civilians in Lands of Disbelief'.

Thus, there are differences between the concepts and topics covered in Faḍl's previous writings and those in the *Wathīqa*. Therefore, below are overviews of only the frames and topics which are mentioned in the *Wathīqa*. Many of these are categorised by Faḍl under the general frame

⁵⁹⁹ See, for example, Faḍl's writings on the famous jihadi website: Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād: www.tawhed.ws.

⁶⁰⁰ See, for example, al-Maḳdisī's introduction to his annotations on Faḍl's *al-Jāmi'*. These comments are attached to the version of *al-Jāmi'* used in this dissertation.

⁶⁰¹ 'Uṣūlī' is an adjective derived from *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* which means Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. It is beyond the scope of this research to discuss each individual rule and detail the scholars' acceptance and rejection of them. However, all the *Uṣūlī* rules employed by the two groups under discussion are acceptable to the majority, but not necessarily to all, mainstream Sunni Muslim scholars, including those highly respected by Jihadists. Thus, framing in these rules means that both Jihadists and non-Jihadists accept them in general terms and thus can be employed to prove a religious argument based on rules recognised by mainstream scholars. This is confirmed by the fact that critics of the revisions did not question the validity of these rules per se or their general applicability but instead cast doubts on their application to the current state of affairs, as framed by writers of the revisions.

⁶⁰² Reasons for this will be mentioned in the final analysis at the end of this chapter.

of ‘jihad’ which is the common denominator of most of the topics covered in the *Wathīqa*.⁶⁰³ The main message of Faḍl in the *Wathīqa* is: stop violence against the regime and others, for this is a mistaken concept of jihad. Therefore, unlike the previous chapter, the overview of Faḍl’s arguments after revisions will start with jihad and matters related to it. It will also be arranged, like the topics of the previous chapter, according to their influence on local Muslims, local non-Muslims and then foreign non-Muslims. These topics according to the above order, include: jihad and forced *ḥisba*; *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion; targeting civilians in ‘Muslims’ lands’; People of the Book living in Muslims’ lands (*Dhimmīs*); attacking tourists and foreigners; attacking non-Muslims in their lands and *tatarrus*; killing non-Muslim civilians in lands of disbelief; and rulings on Muslims living in ‘lands of disbelief’. The overviews of these concepts will show that Faḍl either overgeneralised or kept silent on issues that relate to his understanding of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr*, which will also highlight his new approach and methodology and help evaluate his new interpretations.

Faḍl’s Views after Revisions

Faḍl’s starring chapter in the *Wathīqa* asserts that the anger of God is not called forth by anything more than bloodshed and destruction of properties.⁶⁰⁴ Faḍl wrote the *Wathīqa* to warn against appalling actions that are unlawful in Islam and are perpetrated in the name of jihad, particularly in Islamist movements’ confrontations and conflicts with governments and systems.⁶⁰⁵ To clear his responsibility for violent acts that Jihadists committed based on his writings, Faḍl states that he is not a scholar or a mufti and that the content of his works is basically generic, academic observations and that, as such, are unable to be implemented in definitive cases; only adequately proficient scholars could do that. Whatever exists in his writings and looks like fatwas, it is among his personal views that are not binding on anyone. Faḍl also adds that if anything in his writings proves to be wrong, he takes it back.⁶⁰⁶ So, the general line of argument in the *Wathīqa* is: Stop acts of jihad as you misunderstood and misapplied jihad. This is shown clearly in the following arguments on jihad and forced *ḥisba*.

⁶⁰³ For a summary of all the articles of the *Wathīqa*, see Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 12-13.

⁶⁰⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, the introduction.

⁶⁰⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, the introduction.

⁶⁰⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, the introduction; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 12.

After Revisions: Jihad⁶⁰⁷ and Forced *Ḥisba*

Unlike his pro-violence writings wherein Faḍl used *ḥākimiyya* as a general and central frame, 'correct jihad' was the general and central frame used by Faḍl in his revisions to argue against violence. Therefore, he discussed jihad and *ḥisba* together because both of them were used to justify acts of violence in Egypt, though acts of violence based on *ḥisba* were practiced by the IG rather than Faḍl's own organisation al-Jihād. In his attempt to prove that jihad is not the right option nowadays, Faḍl framed incapacity as a condition for any act to be considered a religious duty and then applied this to jihad, it being one of these religious duties.

Unlike before, Faḍl has amplified the importance of capacity by giving prolonged details about it as a condition for jihad. Though he mentioned capacity as a condition in his previous writings, he insisted that the lack of capability requires preparation. Now he argues that the lack of capacity waives the obligation altogether. Each of the two arguments suit the purpose of his writing at each respective stage. In his previous writings he was trying to encourage others to launch 'jihad' or make necessary preparations for it, and that is why he was removing constraints that might hinder this objective, which was reflected in his request for preparation at times of incapacity. Now he is trying to convince others that jihad is not the right option, which was reflected in his argument that the lack of capacity completely waives the obligation. This also affected his conception of the scope of capacity as in the new argument Faḍl expanded his framing of capacity by including the wider context as part of it, noting that capacity is not limited to the physical or financial ability of the *mujāhidūn* themselves but also extends to the surrounding circumstances.

Then Faḍl attended to his main goal: applying the general description of incapacity to Jihadists, which results in waiving the obligation of jihad. "A look at the reality reveals that situations of Islamist movements that are trying to implement the Sharia and forbid evil in most of the Muslims' lands nowadays vary between weakness and incapacity."⁶⁰⁸ Faḍl also framed extensively the *Uṣūlī* principle of weighing harm and benefit to support his arguments on the futility of jihad and *ḥisba*. He argued that because of the great harm involved, it is impermissible

⁶⁰⁷ All the conditions and arguments stated under this title apply to jihad in general including, but not limited to, 'jihad against apostate rulers.' The latter is covered separately later in this chapter.

⁶⁰⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 3. *Al-Wathīqa* is a book that was not published in a book form, but instead in the form of newspaper articles. The newspapers introduced the articles as part of the whole book and published them on daily basis. The total number of the published articles makes the whole book.

to change evil with the hand [forced *ḥisba*] except for someone who has authority over something, such as a father with his family. Another exception is when it is necessary to interfere to save a Muslim from an immediate threat. Likewise, it is not permissible to clash with the governing authorities in Muslims' lands in order to implement the Sharia. Due to the fact that changing evil by force and clashes are unattainable as Sharia-approved options, they are not compulsory.⁶⁰⁹

As Faḍl has declared that jihad is not the suitable option due to weakness and incapability of Jihadists and because experience has proven its futility and grave harm, he had to suggest other options and provide alternatives. These are: *da'wa*, emigration, seclusion, forgiveness, condonation, turning away, patience when faced with harm, and concealing faith. The Prophet, Faḍl notes, and his companions practised all of these options according to their ability and circumstances. Faḍl also widened the scope of capacity to include resources. According to Faḍl, jihad is not obligatory for a person who does not have sufficient resources with which to carry it out. Resources, Faḍl notes, are not only what is needed to make jihad but also what will be sufficient to support the family and dependents of the *mujāhid*.⁶¹⁰

Faḍl extended his new framing of 'incapacity waives the obligation' to the point that he applied it even if jihad is an individual obligation. In this regard, Faḍl has criticised those who— in order to perform jihad which is not obligatory because of the lack of resources— commit unlawful acts such as kidnapping others to request a ransom and commit robberies that may lead to killing inviolate people. Those who carry out such acts have committed what is unlawful in order to perform something which is not compulsory on them. By this, Faḍl is referring to some jihadi groups which used to do these acts, more particularly the Egyptian IG. As the end does not justify the means in Islam, these acts of robbery, burglary and kidnapping to finance jihad are forbidden, and the good intention of financing jihad is not an acceptable reason or valid justification to commit such unlawful acts.⁶¹¹ By linking the lack of resources to incapacity and connecting both to such acts that are commonly abhorred by people and perceived as unlawful as robbery, burglary and kidnapping, Faḍl has practised both frame bridging, frame amplification and frame extension strategies.

⁶⁰⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 3.

⁶¹⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 3.

⁶¹¹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 3.

To further consolidate his argument Faḍl placed more constraints on jihad by stating that one of its conditions is having the permission of parents and creditors. Without it, a person would not be allowed to go for jihad. Faḍl has further amplified this by stating that the condition of such permission could apply even when jihad is an individual obligation; if jihad is likely to cause harm to parents. Faḍl, however is silent on the permission of creditors when jihad is an individual obligation.⁶¹²

In his previous writings, Faḍl has stated that parents and creditors' permission is necessary only in jihad when it is a collective obligation (*al-Jihād al-Kifā'ī*),⁶¹³ but when jihad is an individual obligation, this condition is dropped. Faḍl's previous argument complies with what is stated by other Muslim scholars in this regard, but the fact that he has not dropped this condition when jihad is an individual obligation is a new opinion that contradicts his old view as well as what Muslim scholars have agreed upon.⁶¹⁴ According to Muslim scholars⁶¹⁵ such as Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, al-Shāfi'ī and Ibn Ḥanbal, jihad becomes an individual obligation in three cases, one of which is when the enemy attacks Muslim lands. In this case, everyone has to defend the lands of Islam with whatever means they have and without permission from parents or creditors.

In *al-Jāmi'* Faḍl considered jihad an individual obligation on everyone nowadays as all Muslim countries are under attack either by foreign invaders or by apostate rulers and regimes that apply laws of disbelief. Therefore, Faḍl noted, the condition of having one's parents' and creditor's permission does not apply in practice nowadays, as jihad is an individual obligation. Thus, applying the condition of having parents' permission to individual jihad in the *Wathīqa* is another constraint tailored to suit Faḍl's current purpose, which is to discourage Jihadists from attacking their regimes. This shows the difference between the old strategy of lifting constraint on rebellion and the new one of placing them.

Faḍl has disclosed the message he wants to communicate by speaking about these conditions when he said, "What is sorrowful nowadays is to see some Muslims going for jihad and traveling from their countries to another country to participate in jihad or a martyrdom operation without their parent's permission or even knowledge, and sometimes without their creditors'

⁶¹² Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

⁶¹³ That is when jihad is an obligation on the Muslim Ummah collectively, in the sense that a sufficient number of Muslims has to undertake it but not necessarily every individual Muslim.

⁶¹⁴ For elaboration of scholars' opinions on this issue, see, e.g., Al-'Awāysha, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiqhiyya al-Muyassara*, 7: 85 ff; Wizarat al-Awqāf, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiqhiyya*, 16: 132 ff.

⁶¹⁵ For details on this issue, see, e.g., Wizarat al-Awqāf, *Al-Mawsū'a al-Fiqhiyya*, 16: 130 ff.

permission. At times they even do not leave necessary expenses for their dependents. All of these are sins that a Muslim must avoid. They might die or get killed in that jihad while having these sins."⁶¹⁶

Faḍl has also framed in pragmatism and contextualisation by emphasising the importance of taking the milieu into consideration. To do so, he employed a number of *Usūlī* pragmatic rules. For example, he stated that God has founded this life on the cause and effect rule (i.e. the rule that success (effect) depends on the efforts made and the surrounding circumstances), not on supernatural occurrences which might occur but they are not the original norm. By this, Faḍl is asserting that pragmatism and calculations of powers are necessary and must not be overlooked under the pretext of having God's protection or support, as Jihadists do. Another *Usūlī* pragmatic rule employed by Faḍl is 'the means and end rule' which Faḍl stressed by framing jihad as a means and not an end, arguing that the goal behind jihad is to establish the religion and support the believers and that protecting Muslims against destruction is one of the principal objectives of the Sharia. Hence, if jihad is not going to achieve its end and will result in harm to Muslims it should be stopped, which is the case now.⁶¹⁷

On occasions, Faḍl would employ history and the biography of Prophet Muḥammad to support his general organisational frames of incapacity and weighing the harm and benefit. In this case he supported his view by stating that God did not make jihad, *walā'* and *barā'* or changing evil with the hand compulsory for Muslims in Mecca before emigration to Medina as Muslims were weak and doing any of these three obligations would have caused grave harm and evil to the community. Thus, though these three obligations are necessary, they are not allowed if they bring harm to Muslims and more particularly when they are not going to achieve their purpose of establishing the religion. When something is more harmful than beneficial (the rule of weighing harm and benefit or costs and gains), it must be banned, as preventing harm is given priority over securing benefits.⁶¹⁸ By this line of reasoning, Faḍl is shifting from his previous creedal approach to another approach in his arguments concerning jihad. He is framing in pragmatism using an Islamic approach based on principles of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, particularly those of incapacity and weighing harm and benefit.

⁶¹⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

⁶¹⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

⁶¹⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

Part of the new pragmatic approach is 'equivalence of powers', which Faḍl counted as a condition for jihad. According to Faḍl, it is impermissible to drive Muslims towards unequal confrontations that will cause their destruction. He argued for this using the 'means and end rule', re-emphasising that jihad is a means and not an end. Jihad is not meant in and of itself, Faḍl argues, but is meant for the benefit of Muslims; and if it will not achieve that benefit but bring harm, it must be banned. Again, historical occurrences are used to substantiate Faḍl's general frame of 'harm and benefit'. Faḍl argues that although jihad was prescribed in Medina after *hijra*, treaties and conciliations were also allowed when necessary. The Prophet did all of this: he fought, held treaties and conciliations and kept silent about other enemies without fighting, treaties or conciliations to secure the benefit for Islam. However, Faḍl confirms his employment of the notion of capacity when he notes that it is not permissible to have peace or conciliation with the enemies of Islam if the Muslims are stronger and are more likely to defeat their enemies, which is not the case now. These conditions of capacity and weighing harm and benefit even apply to jihad against 'apostates'.⁶¹⁹

In article 11 Faḍl argued against those who say that jihad is an obligation even if launched by individual(s). He re-emphasised his previous argument, but framed it differently, that jihad by an individual person (or a small number of individuals) is permissible and not an obligation. However, unlike before and in compliance with his new approach, he placed constraints rather than lifting them on this kind of jihad, by stating that for this kind of jihad to be considered permissible, some conditions must be fulfilled. The harm and benefit rule is the first of these conditions, as Faḍl states that this kind of jihad must be likely to bring benefit to Muslims and not cause harm to the religion or other Muslims. Other conditions (constraints) include obtaining the approval of the emir; that this jihad does not violate those inviolable under the Sharia, and that it should not constitute treachery or break a covenant held between Muslims and others.⁶²⁰ By this, Faḍl has laid the conditions of 'jihad' in general whether it is against the near enemy or against the far enemy, which has enabled him to direct his critique towards al-Qaeda.

After stipulating these conditions, Faḍl has shifted to the objective for which he has stated these conditions. He criticised al-Qaeda and its leaders, without naming them, for launching 'jihad'

⁶¹⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

⁶²⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

against the US in 9/11 without the permission of the emir Mullah Umar of Afghanistan.⁶²¹ Faḍl criticised al-Ṣawāhirī and other al-Qaeda figures, accusing them of fleeing battles, leaving their families and children behind whilst, at the same time, encouraging others to be steadfast and engage in clashes for which they have no capability or power. Faḍl has further warned Muslim youth against al-Qaeda leaders whom he depicted as 'internet sheikhs', 'microphone leaders', 'slogan merchants', and the 'biggest exporters to graves and prisons'. Hence, this article seems to be tailored not only to argue against Jihadists or convince al-Jihād members of the futility of violence but also to criticise al-Qaeda and accuse it of treachery and destroying Islam, which reflects the nature of relationship between Faḍl and his ex-fellows at that time.

Such a critique and counter-framing also helps achieve the hoped results of the *Wathīqa* and helps Faḍl and his fellows earn favour with the prison authorities. This is supported by the fact that Faḍl has already mentioned most of these conditions of jihad before in his previous writings. What is new here is that he has applied these general conditions to his ex-fellows of al-Qaeda to arrive at the conclusions described above. However, these conditions are not as important or relevant to his *Wathīqa* as other matters about which he kept silent, such as *ḥākimiyya* and the intricacies *takfīr*.

After Revisions: *Ḥākimiyya*, *Takfīr* and Rebellion

Despite his prolonged discussion of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* in his previous writings, Faḍl has not dedicated a section to the issue of *ḥākimiyya* in the *Wathīqa*, and spoke about *takfīr* in a very generalised way. However, he does make scant reference to *ḥākimiyya* in parts of the *Wathīqa*. For example, in the introduction, Faḍl said that implementing the Sharia is an obligation on every Muslim. A Muslim who neglects such an obligation will be sinful and his faith will be questioned. In article one he declared that the implementation of the Sharia brings welfare and goodness for Muslims in this life and the next and that non-implementation of the Sharia is the reason for ruin in this life and the next. Faḍl has specified article 9 for the criteria governing the issue of *takfīr*. However, he mentioned only a general outline of *takfīr* as one of the Sharia rulings in addition to some criteria that govern the issue in general. He has not spoken about

⁶²¹ For an excellent detailed overview of Faḍl's critique of al-Qaeda and its implications, see Kamolnick, "Al Qaeda's Sharia Crisis."

any specific case that may cause *takfīr*, nor has he discussed any of the several issues related to *takfīr* that he discussed in detail in his pro-violence writings.⁶²²

Faḍl has also emphasised the difference between the general theoretical ruling of *takfīr* and applying this ruling to a specific individual (*takfīr al-muʿayyan*). He argues that the general theoretical ruling cannot be applied to a specific individual except after the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments, and this can be done only by a qualified judge. The only exception to this is apostates, whom Muslims cannot bring under their control because of their power (*Al-mumtaniʿ bi al-qudra*). In this case, fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments are not requirements that need to be met.⁶²³

This is actually what he stated before in his *al-Jāmiʿ*, but this time he did not speak about the refraining group and followers of apostate rulers. He just referred readers to the details of *takfīr* in the seventh chapter of his *al-Jāmiʿ*. Moreover, he acknowledged that *takfīr* is not an easy issue, which is why it needs high juristic qualifications and prolonged study of the Sharia in addition to long experience in fatwas and Sharia judiciary.⁶²⁴ Given Faḍl's prolonged discussion of *takfīr* in his previous writings, this contradicts his statement at the beginning of the *Wathīqa* that he is not a scholar, jurist or a mufti.

In article 5, Faḍl talked about rebellion against the ruler, which is the main topic in his *Wathīqa*. Unlike his previous writings, he did not link rebellion to *ḥākimiyya*. He argued that episodes of insurrections that occurred during the early phase of Islamic history took place because of the despotism of the governing leaders of the time and these were not right, as those who revolted at that time depended, in their religious rationale, on the familiar command to alter wickedness by means of the hand as some *ḥadīths* indicate. Using these *ḥadīths* as a proof is wrong, Faḍl maintains. As these *ḥadīths* are speaking in general terms, it is not correct to implement them to governing leaders as specific *ḥadīths* ban insurrection against governing leaders who are Muslims.⁶²⁵ He framed this judgment by evoking the *Uṣūlī* rule which states that specific Sharia texts are to be given priority and preference over those that are general in nature.

⁶²² An analysis of why Faḍl kept silent on these and similar issues is provided at the end of this chapter.

⁶²³ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 10.

⁶²⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 10.

⁶²⁵ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 38.

Faḍl has quoted a number of sacred texts⁶²⁶ to reinforce his point of view that it is disallowed to dissent and rise up and confront governing leaders that are Muslims. This is so even if such leaders are guilty of despotism. However, his view in this regard did not introduce anything new as even jihadists believe that it is prohibited to rebel against Muslim rulers. The problem of rebellion arises only when the ruler is classified as apostate. Therefore, Faḍl started discussing the ruling of rebellion if a ruler becomes apostate. However, he did not specify any reason that could render the ruler apostate. He just made a distinction between being cognizant of the disbelief of the ruler and insurrection against him; which, it is important to note, is not mandatory if the people are unable to depose him or if it entails harm, specifically if the harm is grave and goes beyond the normal costs known in jihad.⁶²⁷

Thus Faḍl disallowed rebellion even against apostate rulers by framing in his two major organisational *Uṣūlī* frames: the rules of capacity and harm and benefit. After that Faḍl substantiated his theoretical argument by invoking past historical experiences of rebellion and showing how harmful they were. He discussed examples- throughout the recent past - of attempts to oust governing leaders with the purpose of applying Sharia. Faḍl says that such endeavours brought about serious corruption and damage, not only to the Islamic groups, but also the countries that directly witnessed the insurrection. The very nature of insurrection is serious damage and ruin, therefore, it is incumbent to evaluate it according to the *Uṣūlī* rule which states that it is not permissible to abolish harm by bringing about another form of harm that is much the same or even worse than the original one.⁶²⁸

Faḍl supported his argument on harm and benefit by quoting some juristic rules from the *Uṣūlī* writings of his oft-quoted Salafi Scholar Ibn Taymiya: For example, he quoted Ibn Taymiya's assertion that there are two cases wherein it is permissible to countenance an immoral action. First, to prevent an act that is even more wicked, and there is no other way to do this. Second, in order to obtain a thing that provides more benefit than preventing the immoral act, if this is the only way to do so. Likewise, there are two cases wherein an acceptable act may be given up. First, if maintaining the acceptable act results in the loss of something superior to it. Second, if the result is that a wicked act ensues, the harm of which is more serious than the result of the

⁶²⁶ One of these is the *ḥadīth* in which Prophet Muḥammad informed his companions that there would be unjust rulers and instructed them not to rebel against them unless they see a clear-cut disbelief. See Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 5.

⁶²⁷ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 38.

⁶²⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 5; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 38.

acceptable action.⁶²⁹ This suggests two things.. Firstly, that Faḍl is insisting on his new *Uṣūlī* approach and secondly, that he is still situating himself within the Salafi tradition albeit from a different angle.

If we consider Faḍl's emphasis on the futility of 'jihad' nowadays due to incapacity and the harm involved in framing and collective action terms, it is a form of accentuating the lack of political opportunity. As framing research proposes: "though political opportunity structures can facilitate or constrain collective action framing processes, the degree or extent of political opportunity in any society is seldom, if ever, a clear and easily read structural entity. Rather, its existence and openness is subject to debate and interpretation and can thus be framed by movement actors as well as by others."⁶³⁰ Therefore, Faḍl's emphasis on the lack of political opportunity was contested by al-Ẓawāhirī and other jihadists⁶³¹ through a different reading and interpretation of the political climate and available opportunity.

After stating that jihad is not compulsory nowadays due its harm and lack of capacity, Faḍl further amplified his framing by stating that 'jihad' nowadays involves some acts that are unlawful under the Sharia so is therefore prohibited. He provided some practical examples of the violations committed by Jihadists. Some such examples include slaying those who are blameless and doing so under the pretence of *tatarrus*. Next, acquiring unlawful wealth in ways such as theft, taking people captive and giving the excuse for doing so of providing funds for jihad. Betraying the disbelieving people and breaking covenants with them when entering their countries while having leave to do so, then proving to be unfaithful to them. Finally, being rendered incapable of maintaining the security of Muslim families during times of conflict. Therefore, Faḍl, employing another *Uṣūlī* rule,⁶³² concludes that jihad is impermissible as militants "committed what is unlawful for them in order to do something that is not mandatory; they are not required to perform jihad if they do not have the capacity to do so."⁶³³ Thus Faḍl's argument that jihad is not obligatory due to the lack of capacity is a necessary premise to his subsequent argument that jihad as practised by Jihadists nowadays is impermissible as it involves unlawful acts. He arrived at this by using the juristic rules of weighing different Sharia

⁶²⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 5. The original text quoted can be found in Ibn Taymiya, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 20: 53; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 39.

⁶³⁰ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 631.

⁶³¹ Details of this debate and contest are discussed in the first and second chapters.

⁶³² The rule states that whatever leads to a haram is haram even if it was originally permissible.

⁶³³ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 5; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 39.

rulings and prioritising one of them in case of collision. This enabled him to arrive at the conclusion that it is impermissible to commit an illegal act to achieve a lawful non-compulsory end.

Faḍl made his general arguments against rebellion more specific by referring to the case of Egypt and then implementing both Sharia and rational deductions to that case. At the conclusion of the *Wathīqa*, he referred to six Sharia and rational deductions that determined it was unlawful to seek to overthrow the regime in Egypt. He noted that in many countries the preconditions and requirements of performing jihad are simply not present. As a consequence, *da'wa* and means of reform should be the object of people's focus. The reason for this is that confrontation and conflict bring about serious harm and numerous examples in history and pragmatism attest to this fact. To further support this specific framing, Faḍl again employed history to prove his arguments and emphasised that taking history into consideration is a religious obligation. By reviewing the history of Egypt, Faḍl clarified that change – both political and social – (in Egypt) only took place by means of foreign incursion or the government being overthrown by people and groups within it. The jihadi movements are incapable of either way, as they do not fit the criteria of foreign aggressors and they are also not participating in the working of the regime itself. Moreover, Faḍl referred to the geographical components and chronicled facts of Egypt to justify his stance; that modern day attempts of Jihadists to oust the regime would never be met with success (constraint placing).⁶³⁴

In fact, his referring to historical facts to justify his stances is a new tool to buttress his view of the futility of any jihadi operations against the Egyptian regimes. However, it should be noted that this new approach is not to prove a religious argument but to prove a practical fact which is that any military attack conducted against Egypt by anyone other than its own army or foreign enemy will not be successful. After establishing this fact, Faḍl used it as a premise for his religious argument.

Faḍl's conception of futility of jihad against the Egyptian regime is a consequence of his exposure to the unpleasant reality after the failure of his previous jihadi project that led him and his fellows to triumph over miserable conditions in prison. The direct exposure to the reality in Faḍl's practical life somewhat alienated him from his utopian realm of texts and brought about

⁶³⁴ ; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 39-40.

some change in his recognition and reaction to the reality. This is reflected in the pragmatic approaches and methodologies he used to argue for, or against this reality.

People of the Book Living in Muslims' Lands (*Dhimmīs*)

Under this title, Faḍl discussed his new view of the relations with non-Muslim minorities living in Muslim countries, particularly the Christians of Egypt. As with previous concepts, Faḍl shifted the focus of dealing with *Dhimmīs* from *ḥākimiyya* into his new general frames of incapacity and harm and benefit. To do so, he removed local non-Muslims from the category of *dhimma*, stating that they are no longer considered *Dhimmīs* because they are considered by constitutions of these countries as citizens and not treated according to the 'Umarī conditions of the covenant of *dhimma*. Therefore, they are 'People of the Book not included in a covenant'. As the 'Umarī conditions are unchangeable to Faḍl, he stated that these conditions are binding on Muslims only when they have the capacity to enforce them.⁶³⁵ Thus, Faḍl managed to shift his opinions on non-Muslim minorities living in Muslim lands mainly when he moved them from the category of *dhimma* and dropped the obligation of enforcing the 'Umarī conditions based on the juristic notion of incapacity.

In addition, he framed in the general principles of the Sharia to argue for treating them kindly. He sees that Muslims have to treat non-Muslim minorities kindly for three reasons:⁶³⁶

- 1- It is not they who failed to fulfil these conditions; they have not been met because of the implementation of modern laws that apply to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This stands in clear contradiction of Faḍl's previous argument that the Christians tried hard and were happy with changing these conditions.
- 2- For the most part, they treat Muslims kindly, so equal treatment is required from Muslims. This also contradicts his previous statement that they abused and violated Muslims.
- 3- The Quran [60:8] instructs Muslims to treat non-Muslims kindly. Non-Muslims are also neighbours of Muslims and Islam urges Muslims to be kind to neighbours, regardless of their faith. According to Faḍl, kind treatment should be observed more particularly with the Egyptian Christians because Prophet Muḥammad advised Muslims to take special care of them as they share kinship relations with him. This line of argument is new from Faḍl as he is using general

⁶³⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 10.

⁶³⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 10.

guidelines of the Sharia (treating people and neighbours kindly) to arrive at a ruling (the way to deal with non-Muslims not included in a covenant) regarding which there is a specific instruction from the Sharia, an approach which he himself criticised before. A similar approach was used in arguing against attacks on tourists and foreigners.

Targeting Civilians in ‘Muslims’ Lands’

In his criticism of jihadist movements in article 8, Faḍl spoke about their attacks against civilians in Muslim countries. Faḍl rationalised these attacks as being due to jihadist movements’ inability to attack their regimes, which prompted them to target civilians who are an easy target, only as a means to disturb the regimes they were unable to attack. As with other concepts above, Faḍl argued against targeting civilians employing an *Uṣūlī* approach. According to Faḍl, people in ‘Muslims’ lands’ are either apparently Muslims (*Mastūr al-ḥāl*) who are known to be Muslims while there is no evidence to prove that their faith has been disturbed, or anonymous (*Majhūl al-ḥāl*) as there is nothing to indicate whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. In both cases, targeting these people is not allowed as the outward Muslim is assumed to be an inviolable Muslim and the unidentifiable cannot be considered non-Muslim until we make sure of that.⁶³⁷

Faḍl also utilised the differences in circumstances between the past and the current ages to support his view, an *Uṣūlī* approach that he rarely utilised in his previous writings as he did not approve of the validity of such changes. He argued that in the past those whose faith was not outwardly manifest in lands of Islam were considered Muslims as non-Muslims were forced to wear clothes different from those of Muslims and the Sharia punishment for apostasy was applied. However, nowadays both matters (having a different dress code and punishment of apostasy) are not applied. Hence, people in Muslims’ lands nowadays are a mixture of different kinds.⁶³⁸ This allowed him to utilise the rule that: a person’s status of faith cannot be changed except with sufficient evidence to the contrary; and the *Uṣūlī* rule that when the prohibited mixes with the permissible, the prohibited takes priority.

Therefore, he concludes, based on these rules, that it is prohibited to attack a mixture of people that include Muslims, non-Muslims, those who are outwardly Muslims and those whose faith is unknown as doing so will definitely lead to attacking the inviolate. Faḍl also proceeds with his

⁶³⁷ The *Uṣūlī* rule states that a person’s status of faith cannot be changed except with evidence to the contrary.

⁶³⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

Uṣūlī approach noting that mass killing in bombings is either completely prohibited or dubiously prohibited, and when something certainly prohibited mixes with something dubiously prohibited, both must be treated as completely prohibited. After all, targeting the anonymous is not allowed except after making sure of their situation, which is unattainable nowadays. Faḍl finishes his comments on this point saying that he does not consider targeting common people in Muslims' lands to be an act of 'jihad' as there is no justifiable reason to target these people.⁶³⁹

The same applies when it comes to targeting other Muslim sects such as the Shiites. Killing them is completely prohibited as they are still Muslims despite their 'evident aberration'. So, killing based on the dogmatic affiliation is as prohibited as killing based on nationality, appearance, identity, skin or hair colour, etc.⁶⁴⁰ Though Faḍl argued against targeting civilians in his revisions, he did not argue to the contrary in his previous writings though some of his writings on *tatarrus* could have been used to justify such attacks. Therefore, his opinion in this regard cannot be categorised as revisions as he did not call for the contrary before. What he directly justified before was attacking non-Muslims in Muslims' lands by framing in the concept of *dhimma*.

Attacks on Tourists and Foreigners (*Amān*)

In his previous writings, Faḍl stated that if foreigners enter 'Muslims' lands' with a visa from the government, it does not constitute a valid *amān* as this visa is issued by apostates and not by Muslims. As a result, Muslims would not have to respect it unless they were invited by a Muslim. However, in his revisions, he reframed this issue differently by directly speaking about the reasons why tourists and foreigners must not be targeted. As with other concepts, Faḍl based his new argument on several reasons that are related to or based upon *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* that will be discussed below.

Employing the *Uṣūlī* approach of contextual differences, Faḍl noted that differences between the current circumstances and those of the past must be taken into consideration. He noted that in the past Muslims lived in lands of Islam and non-Muslims in lands of disbelief. Now they are mixed and it is too difficult to distinguish them. In Islamic countries in the past, non-Muslims were distinct from Muslims in their dress code, as conditions of *amān* were enforced. Now

⁶³⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

⁶⁴⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

Muslims are unable to force non-Muslims to have a different dress code because of the inability to apply the Islamic laws.⁶⁴¹

Also, Muslims are now spread worldwide and it is not possible to distinguish them from non-Muslims, which makes it imperative to avoid harming them if they would be included in any attacks on other targets. This last argument is based on the *Uṣūlī* rule that when the permissible inseparably mixes with the impermissible, impermissibility takes priority. As a person's nationality, ethnicity, language, colour of skin or hair, Faḍl emphasises, is not an indication of being a Muslim or a non-Muslim, these physical features cannot be taken as a justification to kill that person.⁶⁴²

Faḍl further amplified his framing by utilising some aspects of his previous interpretation of *amān*. He argued that even if the foreigners were distinct from Muslims and they were certainly non-Muslims, it is impermissible to attack them for they may have a valid *amān* if they have come to Muslims' lands through an invitation from a Muslim. Such an invitation is a valid *amān* that must be respected and thus it is illegal to harm those visitors as they have proper *amān* from a Muslim. The visa given by the governing authorities does not prevent this *amān* given by a Muslim from taking effect. Faḍl has also argued that some scholars opine that whatever non-Muslims understand as *amān* should be considered valid *amān*.⁶⁴³ In fact, this argument on *amān* is not new from Faḍl as he made the same argument in his previous writings.

He also noted that even if foreigners in Muslim's lands are undoubtedly unbelievers and are distinct from Muslims, most of them such as children, women, old people, professionals and clergymen are still inviolable under the Sharia. The Sharia prohibits killing these people, as long as they do not fight Muslims, even if they were in the disbelievers' encampments during fighting, let alone killing them when there is no fighting.⁶⁴⁴ This too rests on the *Uṣūlī* rule that when the permissible inseparably mixes with the impermissible, impermissibility prevails.

Faḍl further supported his argument by framing in some general guidelines and principles of the Sharia on dealing with people kindly, a new approach that he did not employ before. An example of this is his statement that the general rule in dealing with non-Muslims is 'treat them as they treat you' except in things which are impermissible under the Sharia. Generally, these

⁶⁴¹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

⁶⁴² Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

⁶⁴³ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

⁶⁴⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

people treat Muslims kindly and respect them when Muslims enter their lands and take good care of them. If there are some breaches in this regard, these are taken as exceptions that do not disturb the general rule. So they should be treated equally when they come to Muslims' lands.

The fifth reason is that those people are not guilty or part of any dispute between Muslims and their regimes. If a person has issues or disputes with his government, why should those people pay the price?⁶⁴⁵

The sixth reason is that most of those non-Muslims do not come to Muslims' lands for war. They come for trade, tourism or the like. Thus, treating them kindly is required in this case based on the general Quranic instruction in this regard. In addition, tourism is permissible in general and the punishment for illegal acts committed by non-Muslims during their visits is not killing. Their disbelief is graver and Islam does not force them to embrace Islam or punish them for being unbelievers. Faḍl ended his arguments by stating that these six reasons are enough to ban causing any harm to those foreigners.⁶⁴⁶

Thus, the last few arguments made by Faḍl show how he embarked upon the new approach of framing in the general guidelines and principles of the Sharia on how to deal with people in general. However, his employment of these general guidelines can be, and was, easily challenged by counter-framing the contextual claims of treating Muslims kindly by non-Muslims and mentioning examples of violations against Muslims by non-Muslims. A similar approach was taken on the other side of *amān*, which is when a Muslim is granted visa to enter non-Muslim countries.

Attacks on Non-Muslims in their Lands and *Tatarrus*

In article seven, Faḍl argues that when Muslims travel to non-Muslims' lands, they are not allowed to cause any harm or trouble to them as they are given valid *amān* by those non-Muslim states which has to be respected. This, he notes, is the issue of 'jihadi operations inside abodes of war' [i.e., lands of disbelief]. This is because the visa granted to Muslims is a valid contract of *amān* that Muslims must respect, even if it was a fake visa that people of these countries thought to be valid.

⁶⁴⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

⁶⁴⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

Faḍl has already made this point in his previous writings. What is new in the *Wathīqa* is that he has employed the *Uṣūlī* approach to develop other reasons to justify why attacks on non-Muslims in their lands are prohibited. This is mainly because Muslims exist almost everywhere in the world nowadays and it is likely that they will be included in the attacks, especially attacks on a large scale, such as bombings. This has brought him to the issue of *tatarrus*.

Faḍl framed his new argument that the concept of *tatarrus* cannot justify killing Muslims by attending to the *Uṣūlī* concepts of necessity and its scope; weighing harm and benefit; the impermissibility of actions when the permissible and impermissible apparently contradict, and the concept of contextual differences. Killing a Muslim, Faḍl argues, under the pretext of *tatarrus* is not sanctioned by a Sharia text but is a kind of *ijtihād* based on an individual's understanding and thus is allowed only when absolutely necessary. Scholars who allow killing the Muslim shield, Faḍl notes, allow this only in defensive jihad when some Muslims are taken by disbelievers as human shields and there is a real fear that the Muslim army and the shield will be destroyed if this human shield is not attacked, and there is no other way of preventing the enemies' attack except by killing it.

This is not the situation in offensive operations inside abodes of war (i.e., Jihadist attacks on non-Muslims in their lands). There is no real necessity for war operations inside abodes of war as these are offensive operations that will cause no harm to Muslims if left or delayed. *Tatarrus* works only when there are two armies and a group of Muslims is taken prisoner by the army of disbelievers to prevent Muslims from attacking them and allow them to defeat the Muslims. Nowadays, Muslims in lands of disbelief are not prisoners of war but citizens and residents. In addition, they are not taken as human shield in situations when there are two warring armies. Furthermore, there is no war status so that Muslims can take precautions and keep away from the battlefield. Rather, they are killed suddenly and without warning (contextual differences). Scholars who allow killing Muslims in such a situation have conditioned that there must be an **absolute decisive necessity**, as this entails allowing the killing of inviolable people while there are numerous Sharia texts that prevent killing them (rules of necessity; mixing of the permissible and the impermissible and the scope of necessity). To override these texts, there must be an **absolute decisive necessity**, which means certain total destruction of the Muslim army if the

Muslim shield is not killed. This is not the case in bombing planes, trains and buildings in the 'lands of disbelievers' as there is no decisive necessity for these operations.⁶⁴⁷

Re-employing the previous approach of applying the general principles of Islam, Faḍl concluded that attacking non-Muslims after entering their lands is a breach of the covenant of *amān* and is thus treachery and betrayal, which are completely prohibited in Islam. In addition, this is transgression and God prohibited Muslims from transgression. Even if some non-Muslim countries transgress against Muslims and indiscriminately kill them, Muslims are not allowed to transgress against their citizens as treachery and transgression are not among the things in which equal treatment should be observed. The rule is to treat non-Muslims as they treat Muslims but in matters that do not violate the teachings of the Sharia.

Indeed, killing the inviolate among them, treachery and the unnecessary destruction of property are all violations of the teachings of the Sharia, and therefore equal treatment does not apply to them.⁶⁴⁸ By extending his arguments to include some general Sharia guidelines of concern to most people, Faḍl is employing the frame alignment strategy known as frame extension, a strategy that he also employed in his framing against killing non-Muslim civilians in non-Muslim countries.

Killing Non-Muslim Civilians in Lands of Disbelief (Non-Muslim Shield)

Under this title, Faḍl uses the same approach to argue that it is impermissible to kill non-Muslim civilians in lands of disbelief even if there is no contract of *amān* and even if Muslims are certain that all of those under attack are disbelievers. Killing non-Muslim civilians in planes, trains and buildings is impermissible because in this case killing the non-Muslim shield is not allowed. Killing the non-Muslim shield is allowed only if they exist in the arena of war and fighting the disbelievers will not be possible without attacking them for it is impossible to distinguish them from fighters. So, blowing up these civilian targets is an intentional killing of civilians, an act which is completely prohibited in Islam.

Following the same approach of emphasising the general Islamic principles of justice and prohibition of treachery and betrayal, Faḍl stresses that killing non-Muslim civilians is prohibited whether in peace or in war as it is an act of treachery and betrayal of the covenant of *amān*

⁶⁴⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 7.

⁶⁴⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 7.

while God says, "O you who believe, fulfil your covenants," [Quran 5:1] and the Prophet says, "indeed, treachery is not allowed in our religion."⁶⁴⁹

Muslims Living in Countries of Disbelief

Under this title, Faḍl argues that Muslim residents of non-Muslim countries are not allowed to harm people of these countries or launch any attacks against them. In addition to the reasons mentioned above, Faḍl argues that it is not permissible for Muslims to betray those foreign non-Muslims who offer them residence, security, education and jobs, even if they are unbelievers and there is no contract of *amān*.⁶⁵⁰

As Faḍl has not argued to the contrary of this in his previous writings, the reason he mentioned this issue in his *Wathīqa* appears in the fierce attack he launched against al-Ḍawāhirī and members of al-Qaeda at the end of that article. Faḍl attacked his ex-fellows in the form of a warning to Muslim youth, "I say to residents of foreign countries and to all Muslims: beware of those ignorant people and be careful of the heroes of the internet and leaders of microphones who have addicted the issuing of statements and who throw you to the fire and then flee, leaving everyone behind, even their women and children. They have thrown lots of people before you into burners and prisons using money of intelligence apparatuses. The names and sums paid are there."⁶⁵¹ Thus, the message seems to be that of warning against his ex-friends who have countered his ideology of the near enemy and deviated from the right path by committing these illegal acts.

Analysis and Evaluation

As the authors of *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists* note, "It is extremely difficult to determine whether an individual is truly de-radicalized or merely disengaged; the only way to judge an individual's underlying objectives is by observing his or her words and actions. Yet words and actions do not always accurately reflect objectives. This problem is particularly acute in the case of Islamist extremists, who often participate in de-radicalization programs after being detained

⁶⁴⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 7.

⁶⁵⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

⁶⁵¹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

and thus have strong incentives to misrepresent their beliefs in an effort to secure their freedom.”⁶⁵²

Founded on Faḍl’s arguments in the *Wathīqa* and the general features of his approach explained above, the arguments below are reflections of Faḍl’s thoughts and ideology before and after revisions based on textual analysis of his theological textual arguments, combined with some contextual evidence. By textually analysing and contrasting Faḍl’s current and previous arguments and approaches, this section will reveal if there is a real change in the ideology and will explain the dynamics through which Faḍl could argue for or against violence using Islamic religious arguments in both cases. As this study is concerned with the ideological element of the whole process, the gauge according to which the ideological change will be measured is the reversal or reinterpretation of the previous core ideological constructs that were used to justify violence (as identified and explained in the previous chapter), particularly *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and their related concepts. Thus, a genuine revision is defined here as the reinterpretation and unconditional reversal or modification of the core constructs that were used to justify violence. If these core concepts and frames are not seen to be changed, then there is no genuine ideological revision as the reasons why violence was legitimised remain in force despite the actual halt of violence. As Dina Al Raffie argues, behavioural transformation (the practical cessation of violence) alone is insufficient as an indicator to judge that specific individuals or groups have de-radicalised. Thus, “any study of deradicalization should also seek to gauge changes in individuals’ actual worldviews. This includes accounting for motivations underlying the behavioral shifts, and assessing the extent to which these are merely strategic or indeed permanent rejections of previous ideological positions.”⁶⁵³

Thereupon, a scrutinising look at Faḍl’s texts and arguments reveals that there is no genuine change in the main frames of his ideology. Faḍl has not said that he has been wrong or that his previous writings were mistaken, nor has he said that he is revising his thoughts. All he said is that his writings were misunderstood and abused by others. In addition, there is inconsistency in Faḍl’s arguments. In the introduction, he stated, in what seems to be an attempt to escape blame for the consequences of his previous writings, that he is not a scholar, a mufti or a

⁶⁵² Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 6-7.

⁶⁵³ Al Raffie, “Straight from the Horse’s Mouth,” 28.

mujtahid in the Sharia and that all that is in his books is no more than communication of knowledge to people, which does not require reaching the level of *ijtihad*.

However, this claim is contradicted by the fact that he filled his writings, including the *Wathīqa*, with arguments and deductions and arrived at serious rulings using such phrases as, ‘this is lawful, and this is unlawful’; ‘such is a wrongdoer’, and ‘such is an apostate’.⁶⁵⁴ These verdicts and ways of reasoning can be made only by the most qualified and spectacular scholars and muftis. In addition, his challenge to the rules of the greatest scholars of Islam and criticisms of almost everyone are other proofs that he has considered himself a qualified scholar, *mujtahid* and mufti.

Faḍl’s inconsistency is further evident in his declaration that “it is impermissible for those unqualified in the Sharia among members of the jihadi movements to transfer the general theoretical rulings in the writings from the Righteous Predecessors and bring them to our current worldly reality. Despite texts of the Sharia (the two major sources of Islam: the Quran and the Sunna) being immutable, they are valid for all times and places. This is recognised only by those who are well-versed in the Sharia.”⁶⁵⁵ In fact, Faḍl, who has denied being a qualified scholar or mufti, has filled his writings with examples of what he is warning against now. His verdicts and deductions have not only challenged Islam’s most qualified scholars but have also had extremely serious consequences and implications on Muslim communities at large.

In article 10 of the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl notes that *takfīr* is not a straightforward issue, which is why it requires high juristic qualifications and prolonged study of the Sharia, in addition to extensive experience in issuing fatwas and working within the Sharia judiciary. This further shows inconsistency, as he has spent hundreds of pages in his *al-Jāmi’* discussing *takfīr* and issuing judgments of apostasy against large sections of the Muslim community, which means that he considers himself qualified enough to do so.

To further rid himself of the responsibility of the acts of violence inspired by his writings, Faḍl has claimed that his writings are general theoretical knowledge (*aḥkām muṭlaqa*) that cannot be applied to a specific individual or case without ensuring the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments which can be applied only by qualified scholars, and he is not one of them. However, this contradicts the fact that he has not only applied general knowledge to specific

⁶⁵⁴ Faḍl’s *al-Jāmi’* and *al-‘Umda* are laden with such examples.

⁶⁵⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 2.

cases in the past and new writings but also set the general theoretical rulings that other 'qualified scholars' should use as guidelines to judge others' faith and behaviour.

Furthermore, although Faḍl claims that the rulings included in his previous writings are general theoretical ones and not fatwas, a review of his writings shows otherwise. Faḍl has applied many of his rulings to specific cases such as Egypt and other Islamic countries. He also criticised two of the IG's books that specifically spoke about Egypt and considered them to be faulty from a theological perspective. The IG books were applying the general theoretical rulings of *al-walā' wa al-barā'* and the refraining group to the Egyptian regime, and he did not criticise them for that, he just criticised them for having what he considered serious theological mistakes. In addition, he has insisted that each individual ruler and each member of their supporters are apostates in person without the need for fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments. Declaring each individual member apostate is an application of the general theoretical ruling to each individual member in person, which contradicts his claim that his writings are only general theoretical rulings.

In addition, Faḍl has applied, in several cases, the general rulings to the Egyptian and other regimes and gave examples in many of his rulings specifying countries such as Egypt and other modern Muslim countries.⁶⁵⁶ The latest example of this is notice two of the *Wathīqa* where he argues why rebellion against the Egyptian regime is not allowed, which is a clear example of applying the general ruling of prohibition of rebellion to a specific case, Egypt. After all, Faḍl has not said that he was wrong or that he has misinterpreted a single issue of what he wrote in his previous writings. It is 'others' who misunderstood them! In addition, he has not acknowledged that any of the views opposing to his has some sort of logic or is closer to the truth, nor has he called his *Wathīqa* revisions or even corrections. It is the media and government analysts who have given his *Wathīqa* that name.

Faḍl's statement that he takes back anything in his writing that contradicts the Sharia cannot be taken as a sign that he has renounced his old writings as this is a general disclaimer that is usually put by authors of Islamic books in the introduction of their writings. An example of this is Faḍl himself who placed this disclaimer in the introduction of his previous pro-violence writings.⁶⁵⁷ Such a statement could be considered a retraction from previous view(s) only when

⁶⁵⁶ See, e.g., Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 875 & 904-5.

⁶⁵⁷ See, for example, Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 6.

an author declares that they have discovered that specific opinion(s) they previously held are wrong for whatever reasons and then starts correcting them, something which Faḍl has not done. On the contrary, his declaration that he takes back his opinions if they are found contrary to the Sharia means that he has made *ijtihād* (deductions by qualified scholars) that has enabled him to arrive at specific opinions and views which he sees compatible with the Sharia. In case his *ijtihād* proves to be mistaken, then he retracts it.

The following arguments start with a briefing about the changeable and unchangeable aspects of the Islamic Sharia. This will help readers understand the argument on how Faḍl could shift from violence to non-violence, if he has done so at all, based on religious justifications in both cases.

Fixed and Flexible Aspects of the Sharia

Islamic legislation⁶⁵⁸ distinguishes between issues of two types, namely, those that are fixed and immutable – predominately referring to ‘*aqīda* (creed), acts of worship, and manners;⁶⁵⁹ and those that are flexible. These are mostly issues of *fiqh*; areas of life that are common to all people.⁶⁶⁰ ‘*Aqīda* (fixed issues) is derived only from uncompromising Sharia texts. The passage of time and varying locations and conditions do not allow these to be altered.⁶⁶¹

Despite the fact that Muslim scholars may disagree on specific issues of creed and different Muslim sects may adopt different versions of creed, each particular group classifies their version of creed as unchangeable. In other words, each group’s version of creed cannot change with time or due to different conditions. Conversely, the everyday matters of people’s lives are pragmatic in nature and issues related to these and transactions (*mu‘āmalāt*) are believed to be within the flexible, changeable domain of the Sharia, whose judgements are determined from

⁶⁵⁸ In actuality, there is not one unified or agreed upon interpretation or body of the Sharia legislations. Instead, as Khaled Abou El Fadl notes, Sharia is “the sum total of technical legal methodologies, precedents, and decisions... that are combined in a subjective process of interpretation and analogy carried out by Muslim jurists.” See Khaled Abou El Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists* (New York: San Francisco, 2005), 39; Al Raffie, “Straight from the Horse’s Mouth,” 44. Therefore, when speaking about Sharia and Islamic legislation in general or a subcategory of the Sharia like Creed or Principles of Jurisprudence, the reference here is to the interpretation of Sharia held by the majority of the orthodox Sunni scholars and generally accepted by Salafis and Salafi jihadists, despite the differences in interpreting some individual concepts like *hākimiyya* and *takfīr*.

⁶⁵⁹ See, for instance, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Abd al-Khāliq, *Al-Salafiyyūn wa al-A‘imma al-Arba’a* (Kuwait: Al-Dār al-Salafiyya, 1978), 24-8.

⁶⁶⁰ See, e.g., Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Bayyināt al-Ḥall al-Islāmī wa Shubuhāt al-‘Almāniyyīn wa al-Mutagharribīn* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 1993), 76-7.

⁶⁶¹ Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 42.

sacred texts. At the same time, the conditions of people and the change of circumstances are taken into consideration and the benefits and harm should be weighed whenever a judgement is given. This means that personal reasoning (*ijtihād*) is of great significance to this type of rulings as sacred texts covering these flexible issues are – most of the time – indeterminate and universal (*‘āmma wa ḡanniyya*).⁶⁶² In dealing with the changeable issues, the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*) are employed.⁶⁶³ Thus, these rulings may be altered or reviewed in accordance with varying or different locations, times, situations, customs, etc.⁶⁶⁴

In principle, Faḍl has emphasised that issues of governance, legislation and *ḥākimiyya* are all connected to the foundation of faith and the core of creed. So they are not among the changeable issues of Jurisprudence or issues of ‘branches’ (*furū’*) which can be changed with time and difference of places and circumstances.⁶⁶⁵ Thus, by placing these issues in the static side of the Sharia, Faḍl is closing the door of any possible discourse or negotiation over these issues and is also making it acceptable for himself to accuse of disbelief and/or deviation whomever opposes his views in this regard. This is what he has already done in his *al-Jāmi’*.

Given the fact that Faḍl has classified his central frame of *ḥākimiyya* and issues of belief and disbelief (*takfīr*) in the unchangeable side, the fact that he did not say he was wrong or he was revising his previous views and the fact that his new writing is full of ambiguous overgeneralisation; none of Faḍl’s arguments in the *Wathīqa* should be considered a retraction or revision of his previous thought unless he expresses this directly or indirectly in his new arguments. In other words, if Faḍl has expressed any opinion in his previous writings and overgeneralised or kept silent on it in his *Wathīqa*, he will not be considered to have retracted the old view as there is nothing to indicate, directly or indirectly, that he has changed his view in this regard. This will be the general rule followed in this section, particularly due to the approach

⁶⁶² Al-Qaradāwī, *Bayyināt al-Hall al-Islāmī*, 76-7. For a comprehensive definition and explanation of the changeable and unchangeable matters in the Sharia, see Salāḥ al-Sāwī, *Al-Thawābit wal Mutaghayyirāt fī Masīrat al-‘Amal al-Islāmī al-Mu’āsir* (London: Al-Muntadā al-Islāmī, 1994), 37-46; Nāṣir b. Sulaymān al-‘Umar, “Thawābit al-‘Umma fī ḡill al-Mutaghayyirāt al-Dawliyya,” *Shabakat al-Mishkāh al-Islāmiyya*, *Buḥūth wa Dirāsāt* (online: [14 February 2005] Accessed 25 June 2012).

⁶⁶³ ‘*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*’ refers to the science of Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence which explores the proper employment of available Sharia evidence and how to apply them to real life situations in connection with the conditions of the people to whom these rulings apply. In other words, it is the set of rules and regulations employed to arrive at the main rulings contained in the Sharia texts and applying them to particular cases or situations. See, for example, ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Kāfī al-Subkī, *Al-Ibhāj Fī Sharḥ al-Minhāj* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1404 AH), 1: 19; Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi’*, 817; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 42.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *I’lām al-Muwaqqi’in ‘an Rabbi al-‘Ālamīn*, ed. Ṭāha ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Sa’d (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1973), 3: 3; Ibrahim, “Jihadists Quit Violence,” 42.

⁶⁶⁵ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi’*, 900.

of the *Wathīqa*, which is overgeneralising and avoiding giving details of what contradicts Faḍl's previous convictions and what may undermine the purpose of his *Wathīqa*.

Generally speaking, in issues where Faḍl still holds to his old views, he is either completely silent or is offering an ambiguous overgeneralisation, particularly in the points related to *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*, which are the main and most important issues to him. In principle, Faḍl has not renounced his old views or rules. He has just shifted the focus of his arguments from the static issues of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* to the operational issues which are considered practical implications of these issues, such as rebellion, and thus can be measured by the *Uṣūlī* principles of harm and benefits, where he can make manoeuvres and few limited concessions.

The argument will start with the most important issue of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr* before it covers the practical implication of both concepts which is rebellion against the ruler. It has been established in the previous chapter that *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are the major and most important frames which influence almost all of Faḍl's pro-violence framing. And it has also been established that Faḍl's views become very radical and inflexible when it comes to anything related to *ḥākimiyya*; yet he can make concessions in practical operational issues in case of incapacity and weakness. Thus, the degree of change in Faḍl's ideology would be largely determined by the degree of change in his conception of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*.

Comparing the extended arguments and details given by Faḍl in his previous writings regarding these two issues with what he has mentioned in his *Wathīqa* reveals a huge gap between both. In *al-Jāmi'*, Faḍl dedicated more than 500 pages for *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* while in the *Wathīqa* he wrote no more than three pages of general guidelines on *takfīr* without giving any details, and he kept silent on *ḥākimiyya* and whether or not it causes apostasy. Given the above-mentioned rule, this means that Faḍl has nothing new to offer in this regard. Furthermore, when it comes to details of *takfīr*, Faḍl is referring his readers to his book *al-Jāmi'* where he declared wide sectors of people apostate. This means that he still considers the arguments he made there as valid. Regarding rebellion, following is a reminder of how *ḥākimiyya* leads to *takfīr* and how *takfīr* leads to rebellion.

As rebellion against Muslim rulers is prohibited even in the jihadi view, to justify rebellion against the ruler, this ruler must be considered apostate; and to consider him so, Jihadists use *ḥākimiyya*. However, to arrive at the final ruling of apostasy and then rebellion it is necessary to

follow a number of stages: first, belief that governing by a law other than what God prescribed (violating *ḥākimiyya*) renders the governing leader outside the fold of Islam because of committing major disbelief. Second, implementing *takfīr* - the generic theoretical ruling – to the governing leader in question, while ensuring that the conditions of *takfīr* apply to the leader, and, at the same time, that no impediments are present that could mean the general ruling is not able to be applied to him. Third, directing the implementation of the ruling of *takfīr* against the governing leader. Fourth, having the capability to orchestrate a successful insurrection and ensuring that doing so will not bring about harm that outweighs any advantage derived from ousting the apostate leader.⁶⁶⁶ Implementing these phases to Faḍl's previous opinion reveals that he overstepped all of these stages: 1- He considered ruling with other than God's laws a major disbelief that causes apostasy. 2- He applied the general theoretical ruling of *takfīr* to specific rulers. 3- He dropped the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments because rulers and their supporters are too strong to be subjugated. 4- He stated that capacity and preparation is necessary before making rebellion but practically overlooked the principle of harm and benefits. Consequently, he considered it obligatory to overthrow these regimes once the capacity is attained, and preparation becomes compulsory when capacity is missing.⁶⁶⁷

In his new view, Faḍl has not changed any of the above except that he placed more emphasis on the issue of capacity and the principle of harm and benefits. He bans rebellion merely because of the lack of capacity and the existence of harm that is greater than the benefits of rebellion. He further adds that when capacity is missing, the obligation is waived. So, the stages of *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and fulfilment of conditions preceding the stage of capacity and harm and benefits are still unchanged.

When we classify these steps according to the static and flexible domains of the Sharia, it appears that Faḍl still considers *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence of *takfīr* in the static side, which will not change and will not be weighed by the principle of harm and benefits or capacity. However, he has placed the operational issue of rebellion in the flexible side which can be changed as per the principle of harm and benefit and the factor of capacity. He has not banned rebellion because rulers of Muslim countries are not apostates. He has just banned it because of the lack of capacity and the existence of harm. Thus, it is just the focus of the argument which

⁶⁶⁶ For more on the stages and conditions of *takfīr* in general see, e.g., Ḥāfiẓ, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 97-101; Al-Atharī, *Al-Īmān*, 123-27.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 40.

has been changed from stress on the disbelief of those who violate *ḥākimiyya* to the consideration of the factors of capacity and harm and benefits. Each argument suits the purpose of the stage in which it was written.

So, Faḍl has changed the focus of the argument to the juristic side of the equation, but has not changed his ideology regarding the dogmatic static side, which is the reason why he has called for rebellion. Therefore, although Faḍl has clearly expressed the prohibition of rising up against governing leaders, regardless of their having failed to apply the Sharia, he has not said that such leaders are not rendered apostate, because he has not changed his previous view and therefore has not introduced anything further in this regard. When harm, coupled with inability, make an action forbidden, this implicitly indicates that this action was, in the beginning, permissible or obligatory.⁶⁶⁸ Thus, forbidding rebellion because of incapacity and harm means that rebellion is originally permissible or obligatory, and it can be so only if the ruler is apostate because of his breach of God's *ḥākimiyya* in addition to the ruler's *walā'* to the disbelievers. Thus, Faḍl has not renounced his original position that governing with a law that is not Divinely inspired renders such leaders apostate. Therefore, he has not discussed ruling with manmade law or *ḥākimiyya*, because his view remained constant. This confirms the premise mentioned in the beginning of this section that Faḍl has only discussed that about which he is convinced and likewise, remained silent (or maintained a generalised view) about issues regarding which he still holds his old views.⁶⁶⁹

This does not mean that Faḍl's views regarding apostasy of rulers are the only ones that remain unchanged. Rather, all of his views on issues related to *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* in general, with their applicability to rulers, their supporters and others whom he declared apostate in his *al-Jāmi'*, are also still unchanged. For example, his classification of rulers' helpers and supporters as an apostate refraining group has not changed. He insisted in his *al-Jāmi'* that each individual ruler and each member of their supporters are apostate in person without the need for fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments and he has not said he was mistaken or that he retracted his views in this matter. This could also be understood from the fact that he has not forbidden rebellion because they (helpers of the apostate rulers) are not disbelievers or

⁶⁶⁸ See. e.g., Ibn al-Qayyim, *I' l ām al-Muwaqqi'in*, 3: 3

⁶⁶⁹ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 41.

because it is impossible to make sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments.

As with apostasy of rulers, Faḍl has jumped to the last stage of harm and benefits when he banned attacks on the police and army forces whom he considered members of the refraining group. That is why he has argued in the *Wathīqa* that “it is impermissible to cause harm or to attack the army, police and security forces of the ruling authorities in Muslims' lands because this entails a lot of harm and corruptions.” So, this is not allowed because it “entails harm and corruptions,” not because they are inviolable Muslims. Thus, Faḍl still gives supporters of rulers the same verdict as the rulers even in the prohibition of attacking them because of the harm involved. This confirms that he still considers each individual member of the supporters of apostate rulers as apostates, without the need to make sure of fulfilling the conditions and absence of impediments. That is why when he has noted in the *Wathīqa* that the rulings he has mentioned are general theoretical ones, he made an exception saying that this applies “generally in **most of** the cases,”⁶⁷⁰ for he has declared each member of the refraining group to be apostate in person and he is unwilling to take this back.

The interpretation of Faḍl's statement “generally in **most of** the cases” can be found in another place where he speaks about the general guidelines on *takfīr* in article 10 of the *Wathīqa*. In this article, Faḍl states that the fulfilment of the conditions must be observed before issuing *takfīr* except in one case: the apostates whom Muslims cannot subjugate because of their powers (*al-mumtani' bi al-qudra*). This is exactly his previous argument in *al-Jāmi'* on the refraining group, which means he still classifies supporters of rulers as refraining groups whose members are individually apostate, like their leaders, and that he still holds his previous *takfīrī* rules. In addition, in the same article, he asked his readers to refer to his *al-Jāmi'* for specific rules on *takfīr*, which means he still considers them valid without change.

Besides, when speaking about the reasons why he forbids attacking disbelievers who come to Muslims countries, Faḍl says that attacking them is an act of treachery because they could have come through invitation from a Muslim, which is considered a valid *amān* that has to be respected. However, he has not mentioned the visa given by authorities as it is given by apostates whose *amān* will be invalid for an acceptable *amān* is only what is given by a Muslim.

⁶⁷⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, the introduction.

He even stated that the visa given by authorities does not affect the valid *amān* given by a Muslim.⁶⁷¹

Moreover, though there are plenty of sacred texts proscribing revolt against a Muslim governing leader, regardless of whether he is a tyrant, Faḍl did not refer to any of these sacred texts when contending for his judgement (prohibiting rising up against the regime in Egypt) as they discuss Muslim governing leaders and governments; not apostates.⁶⁷² The fact that he did not use any of these sacred texts to buttress his stance (ban of rebelling against the Egyptian government) suggests that he is not speaking about the Muslim ruler but rather about apostate ones. In the second notice of the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl underpinned his stance regarding disallowing insurrection against Egyptian authorities by outlining six reasons and in none of them does he mention a sacred texts that prohibits rebellion, thus, suggesting that he maintains his stance that governing with manmade law entails apostasy⁶⁷³ and that whoever helps those who violate God's *ḥākimiyya* is also apostate.

The same applies to the ruling of lands that Faḍl has considered 'lands of disbelief and apostasy'. As there is no change in his conception of *ḥākimiyya*, there is no change in anything related to it. While talking about rulings of lands in *al-Jāmi'*, Faḍl stipulates that he calls such lands in his works 'Muslims' lands' or 'lands of Muslims' rather than 'lands of Islam', "... I draw the attention here to the fact that I always describe these lands in my writings as 'Muslims' lands' in regards to the majority of their population. However, this term is not equal to the term 'lands of Islam' as these are in fact lands of disbelief and apostasy, and launching jihad against its apostate rulers is an individual obligation on its Muslim residents."⁶⁷⁴ So, Faḍl considers Muslim countries lands of apostasy because he holds the view that a land is to be characterised by the laws that govern it and should not be classified according to the greater part of its population. Should a country be governed by Islamic laws, then such country would be characterised as Islamic. Likewise, if a country follows laws that are other than Islamic, it would be considered a land of disbelief, regardless of whether or not the bulk of its population is Muslim. In the *Wathīqa*, he still uses the same term 'Muslims' lands' and he never refers to Islamic lands or lands belonging

⁶⁷¹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 6.

⁶⁷² Faḍl cited a number of these texts in his discussion about the injunction against rising up against Muslim governing leaders.

⁶⁷³ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 42.

⁶⁷⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 545.

to Islam when discussing Muslim countries. This means that he continues to consider Islamic countries as lands of disbelief and apostasy, which branches from his static view on *ḥākimiyya*.⁶⁷⁵

This is also true with *tatarrus*. Although *tatarrus* is an operational issue that is subject to the principle of harm and benefit, still there is no change in Faḍl's ideology as far as *tatarrus* pertains to the near enemy or apostate regimes, which are his main concern. As Faḍl's major concern is the 'near enemy' as per his understanding of the issue of *ḥākimiyya*, which he considers the core of *Tawḥīd*, he is not unwilling to adopt another view in operational matters that relate to the far enemy, particularly because his view in this regard is that Muslims are not allowed to target 'original disbelievers' in their countries when Muslims are given a visa that is considered valid *amān*. What he has done is shifting the target of his previous view on *tatarrus* from the near enemy to the far enemy to enable himself adopt another view that on the one hand does not contradict his old view and convictions and on the other hand contributes to depiction of his rival al-Ẓawāhirī and his ex-fellows who ousted him and contradicted his ideology of the near enemy.

A closer examination of Faḍl's previous arguments on *tatarrus* reveals that his controversial views in this regard were in the context of attacks on soldiers and supporters of apostate rulers who usurped the *ḥākimiyya* of God and therefore he would adopt any argument that would allow attacking them, being apostates. This however, is different from the original disbelievers who do not have to be punished by death like Muslims who apostatised through *ḥākimiyya*. Thus, Faḍl's ban of *tatarrus* in the *Wathīqa* is related to offensive operations against original disbelievers, which is not his main concern being unrelated to the issue of *ḥākimiyya*. His previous arguments that allowed *tatarrus* were centred upon attacks on the local apostate regimes which he allowed due to the necessity of applying the Islamic Sharia, which is, according to him, a benefit that is greater than safeguarding the lives of Muslims.

After all, Faḍl's objections to violent acts in general are not because they are wrong in principle but because of the mistakes committed when launching them. While clarifying his motive for writing the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl said that when implementation of the Sharia was suspended, Muslims tried to revive its implementation through a number of means. One of these was to clash with the governing regimes. During these clashes, several religious mistakes and violations were

⁶⁷⁵ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 41-2.

committed, which is why he and the signatories on the *Wathīqa* draw attention to these violations and mistakes so that Muslims can avoid them. This means that the objection is not to the mere idea of clashes themselves but to the violations committed in these clashes. That is why he still describes these violent actions as 'jihad'. This is further reflected in the title of the *Wathīqa* itself: Right Guidance to the **Jihadi Activities** in Egypt and the World. It is clear that the *Wathīqa* is not concerned about the traditional concept of jihad but about the acts of violence conducted by Jihadists, which he still labels 'jihad' and 'Jihadi activities'. Had he considered the mere idea of clashes themselves to be intrinsically wrong, he would not have called them jihad, as jihad is a highly respectable duty in the Islamic Sharia whose name cannot be assigned to something wrong or mistaken. The only thing Faḍl has declared that he does not believe can be called jihad is targeting common people in 'Muslims' lands'.⁶⁷⁶ In all other acts of violence which he has spoken about, he labels them 'jihadi acts'.

In all of the arguments in the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl's point is to say that jihad (here, violence and clashes with local regimes) is not a suitable option at this stage. This carries the implication that it is still an option but not the most suitable one at this particular moment due to the lack of capacity and the harm involved. This is what he has actually stated before in his *al-'Umda* and *al-Jāmi'*. What is different in the *Wathīqa* is not the call for avoidance of clashes but the focus of the call. The focus in books promoting violence was on proving the apostasy of local regimes and the necessity of change, which was reflected in the space assigned to arguments of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr*. In the *Wathīqa*, the focus is on stopping clashes, so greater details and arguments were given to this area.

A look at the other options which Faḍl proposed (*da'wa*, emigration, seclusion, forgiveness, condonation, turning away, patience in the face of adversity, and concealing faith) reveals that he does not consider political opposition and participation in elections as acceptable options. This is because he believes that political participation is an act of disbelief, as explained in the previous chapter that explored Faḍl's views regarding democracy and political participation. These democratic political tools violate *ḥākimiyya*, an area regarding which he is unwilling to negotiate. Hence, he has not considered political participation or democracy one of the available options. Instead, this is one of the issues about which he remains silent. By confining means of reform to these options, Faḍl makes it easy for tyrannical regimes to subjugate and

⁶⁷⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 8.

enslave their peoples without facing even minimal opposition that will force them to make reform and allow people more freedom and rights. He is completely reluctant to employ modern means of political reform, being 'polytheistic', and therefore confines means of social change to things practised by the Prophet and his companions who lived fourteen centuries ago, at a time when political opposition was not an option.

This applies also to Faḍl's argument on *Dhimmīs*. He reiterated what he said in *al-Jāmi'* with a little change in the practical application of these conditions to people at times of weakness and incapacity. The fact that he has not considered People of the Book in Muslim countries to be *Dhimmīs* is not a new positive stance but is a negative one. The People of the Book living in Muslim countries are no longer *Dhimmīs* because they are no longer governed by the 'unchangeable' conditions of *dhimma* and are treated according to the new conditions of citizenship, which Faḍl considers at odds with the Islamic teachings represented in the unchangeable 'Umarī conditions. These conditions of citizenship were laid by the polytheistic constitutions of secular (apostate) states that replaced Islamic laws with positive ones, including new terms of citizenship that replaced the Islamic terms of *dhimma*. So, not considering non-Muslim minorities of Muslim countries *Dhimmīs* does not mean that Faḍl accepts treating them as citizens but it means that they are no longer governed by the contract of *dhimma* that guarantees them due protection. This leads to the consequence that no protection is due to them on the part of Muslims because "to Muslims, they are People of the Book not included in a covenant."⁶⁷⁷ This means that they are treated as 'combatant disbelievers' as per Faḍl's classification of non-Muslims in his *al-Jāmi'*.⁶⁷⁸ However, because saying that they are violable will undermine the whole purpose of his *Wathīqa*, particularly because of the sensitivity of the Coptic issue to the Egyptian regime, Faḍl stated that they should be treated kindly because it is not they who dropped the 'Umarī conditions, and because they are neighbours who treat Muslims kindly. As a result, they should be treated kindly because of the general guidelines of the Sharia which apply to everyone, not because they deserve to be treated kindly in principle as subjects of Muslim countries.

When it comes to the few issues that are not related to *ḥākimiyya*, Faḍl does introduce positive views such as a ban of attacking tourists in Muslims' lands and non-Muslim civilians in non-

⁶⁷⁷ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 10.

⁶⁷⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 1055.

Muslim countries. However, these are still **not new** views, as he did not call for the contrary of this in his past works and there is neither evidence in his writing to say that one should assault visitors to a country and residents of non-Muslim countries nor is there any support for doing so. On the contrary, in *al-Jāmi'* Faḍl asserts that should a Muslim come to countries populated and governed by disbelievers, they are not permitted to cause any harm because of the covenant of security they took; in the form of a visa (even if it is not a valid visa) and in Islam, all covenants are to be adhered to.⁶⁷⁹ So, even in these issues, Faḍl has not provided new arguments that counteract his previous arguments, most likely because these are issues related to the civilians of the far enemy which is not his main concern.

However, he still holds radical views in this regard. For example, he forbids attacking them because of the *amān* given by them to Muslims, not because this should not be done in principle. He still considers non-Muslim countries 'abodes of war' (*dār al-ḥarb*) and still calls operations against non-Muslims "jihadi operations inside abodes of war' [i.e., lands of disbelief].⁶⁸⁰ He also still sees that the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is originally based on war and that Muslims are not allowed to enter into permanent peace agreements as this will lead to the abandonment of jihad.⁶⁸¹

To summarise, in the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl either kept silent or overgeneralised regarding the static issues, and shifted the focus of his arguments to those issues that are flexible. In so doing, he categorised insurrection against a governing leader – regardless of whether he is apostate – in the latter category; such issues are designated according to the principle of harm and benefit. In this way he rendered it disallowed to rise up against a governing leader – apostate or not. In so doing, Faḍl is still employing the same approach and style of writing which is typical of traditional Salafi literature. He still speaks of the 'land of Islam and land of war' (*dār al-Islām wa dār al-ḥarb*) and still uses the conventional Salafi way of reasoning that grants precedence to classical Islamic sources written by the Salaf, thereby practically re-refusing any calls for renewal in Islamic Jurisprudence or any attempt of reinterpreting the classical concepts to match the new developments and the new world order.⁶⁸² This is further reflected in his employment of

⁶⁷⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 653; Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 26.

⁶⁸⁰ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 7.

⁶⁸¹ Faḍl, *Al-Wathīqa*, article 4.

⁶⁸² As explained in the previous chapter, in *al-Jāmi'* Faḍl has criticised modern writers who have tried to reinterpret these old juristic concepts in an attempt to renew Islamic Jurisprudence and make it more interactive with the new challenges of the modern age. See Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 46

sources in the *Wathīqa* where he has not used a single modern source to support any of his religious arguments. Faḍl has continued to quote his classical Salafi scholars even after changing the focus of his arguments from the creedal to the juristic issues, which has entailed a change in the sources employed.

As he has focused on the practical issues related to the flexible side of the Sharia, Faḍl has employed the methodology of the flexible: that is *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. As explained above, throughout the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl still quotes the sources of his preferred classical scholars, most particularly Ibn Taymiya and Ibn al-Qayyim, however, he concentrated on their works concerning *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*; rather than *Aqīda*. The *Wathīqa* cites the word Salaf 14 times, Ibn al-Qayyim 14 times, Ibn Taymiya 24 times, and he buttresses his points of view by referring to 35 rules of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*.⁶⁸³ Thus, although Faḍl had to use more juristic and *Uṣūlī* sources due to the change in the focus of his arguments, he used the juristic sources of the same classical scholars he repeatedly quoted in his previous work. This demonstrates, along with the above arguments on issues related to *ḥākimiyya and takfīr*, that Faḍl is still using the same tools and the same classical Salafi approaches and that he is still in his Salafi Jihadist camp without moving or attempting to move to another camp or typology.

Shifting to the *Uṣūlī* approach led to small alterations in how Faḍl perceived reality (*al-Wāqīʿ*). Faḍl's works that call for violence, paid little attention to reality because of the utopia which he sought in the realm of texts which can be noticed as he sought to lay down a collection of rules that he deemed ideal and which he believed it was incumbent on sincere Muslims to adhere to zealously; regardless of their time, place and circumstances. In the *Wathīqa*, however, Faḍl was disclosed to the complications of the practical world after he and his fellow Jihadists had been detained and faced the atrocities of prisons, in addition to the failure of the jihadi project to establish an Islamic rule in Egypt or elsewhere in the world after the consecutive military and spiritual defeats it received from the governing regimes.⁶⁸⁴ All of this has made him recognise that his utopian approach is no more than a theory in the text that cannot exist in the everyday lives of people and so it is necessary that he manage the reality – regardless of how distasteful it

⁶⁸³ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 44-5.

⁶⁸⁴ Details of this have been discussed and referenced in chapter 2.

might be. For this reason, he moved on to the *Fiqh* of reality and necessity making these few concessions and manoeuvres.⁶⁸⁵

The shift in Faḍl's consideration of reality influenced his attitude towards capacity. In his pro-violence writings, Faḍl argued that if capacity is not present, obtaining it must be ceaselessly pursued, but the new argument is: if capacity is missing, there is no obligation. When he was free he was asking everyone to resist; now he has accepted the defeat and is discouraging Jihadists from resistance. This may be termed 'The *Fiqh* of reality, incapacity, vulnerability and weakness' that constitutes the main tenets upon which Faḍl has built his 'revisions'. So, although Faḍl's core ideological views are not genuinely changed, he has practically closed the door of violence under the pretext of the principles of harm and benefits, incapacity and weakness, a charge which has infuriated Jihadists and prompted them to respond. It is this meaning (denial of weakness and incapacity) to which al-Ḍawāhirī referred in the title of his rebuttal of the *Wathīqa: Clearing the Blame from the People of the Pen and the Sword from the Flaw of the Accusation of Impairment and Weakness*.⁶⁸⁶

When it comes to Faḍl's strong condemnation of al-Qaeda, it is the contrast in ideology between Faḍl and al-Qaeda that has enabled him to make some views which others see as revisions. However, there is nothing in Faḍl's previous writings that calls for the matters in which he condemned al-Qaeda, such as their conception of *amān* and the illegality of considering Muslims or non-Muslims as violable human shields in **offensive operations** in 'lands of disbelief'. Hence, his arguments in this regard cannot be called revisions, as he has never called for anything contrary to them before.

Moreover, Faḍl's condemnation of al-Qaeda and its acts of violence can be interpreted within the context of his personal animosity with al-Ḍawāhirī and his followers among members of al-Jihād Organisation who ousted him and counteracted his ideology of the near enemy by adopting the ideology of al-Qaeda, which focuses on the far enemy. It was due to the 9/11 attacks perpetrated by al-Ḍawāhirī and his fellows that Faḍl was detained, maltreated and most likely tortured after he had been leading a free normal life in Yemen.⁶⁸⁷ Faḍl's animosity with al-Ḍawāhirī is particularly evident in the polemics they exchanged, especially in Faḍl's interview with al-Ḥayāt Newspaper and his polemic *al-Ta'riya* where he replied to al-Ḍawāhirī's *al-Tabri'a*.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 45.

⁶⁸⁶ See Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 45

⁶⁸⁷ Wright, "The Rebellion within," 8.

In these two documents, Faḍl employed very harsh Language and expressions to depict al-Ẓawāhirī of all possible shortcomings.

Faḍl's criticism of al-Qaeda can also be understood as a cover for the radical approach and arguments that he tried to conceal regarding the near enemy. It could also be interpreted in the context of his attempt to gain an asset with the authorities so as to earn himself and his imprisoned fellows a release from prison, as happened with the IG leaders and members.

This brings the question of why has Faḍl written the *Wathīqa* and made such manoeuvres to stop violence despite the reality that he has not genuinely recanted his previous ideology on the root causes of violence? A textual-contextual analysis of Faḍl's texts and justifications shows that he has written the *Wathīqa* in this way to earn himself and his fellow imprisoned Jihadists release from detention - or even minimally – to have their sentences reduced; similar to a number of the IG members and leaders who were all freed at the time of the writing of Faḍl's *Wathīqa*. One of Faḍl's texts that refer to this is his interview with *al-Ḥayāt* Newspaper in which he mentioned that he has sought to convince fellow inmates from al-Jihād who rejected the *Wathīqa*, arguing that **they have to sign the *Wathīqa*** so as to liberate inmates from prison as it is religiously obligatory to free captives according to the Prophet's saying "free the captive," and, after all, it was they who were the cause of them being detained in the first place.⁶⁸⁸

In article 14 of the *Wathīqa*, Faḍl has argued that all Muslims are required – according to the Sharia – to strive their utmost to liberate prisoners in any way possible. Though this is a collective obligation, Faḍl argues, it may become an individual obligation on specific person(s) if it is they alone who can free those Muslim prisoners. He has quoted several religious sources to prove this. One of these is the story of 'Abd Allāh b. Hudhāfa al-Sahmī, one of the companions of Prophet Muḥammad, when he was asked to kiss the head of the Byzantine King in order for Muslim prisoners to be released. Though kissing the head of a disbeliever king is impermissible, al-Sahmī kissed the head of that king in order to release the prisoners, and 'Umar, the Muslim caliph at that time, appreciated what he did.⁶⁸⁹ By this, Faḍl contends that even if one had to do something illegal to free prisoners, they would be justified and excused as they would be trying to do something for the benefit of Muslims. This is what he has done in the bits and pieces of operational issues he discussed.

⁶⁸⁸ Faḍl, "Al-Ḥayāh fī Sijn Ṭura," 2; See Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 27.

⁶⁸⁹ Faḍl, *Al-Whatīqa*, article 14. The story can be found in several classical references, e.g., Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurān al-'Azīm*, 4: 606-7.

Thus, the incentive of release from detention, which Faḍl also bases on Islamic justifications, has emboldened him to develop the *Wathīqa* in that particular way and has played a central part in determining the nature of issues and topics included in the *Wathīqa* as well as its timing. Nonetheless, this incentive has not made him write anything that he does not sincerely believe, but instead led him to the overgeneralisation and manoeuvres which Faḍl has made in his arguments when it comes to things where he still sticks to his old views.⁶⁹⁰ As the government found the revisions of the IG very fruitful, they encouraged the revisions of al-Jihād and highlighted them with huge media coverage and analysts' contributions. However, to the regime, although these 'revisions' are not as satisfactory and advanced as those of the IG, they are better than nothing and help improve the negative image of the regime in the sight of the advanced world and human rights organisations.

This interpretation is supported by the narration of 'Abd al-Mun'im Munīb regarding what happened inside prisons when the security officers asked al-Jihād prisoners to make revisions similar to those of the IG. Munīb, who shared the same prison cell with al-Jihād members, stated that there were three different groups among al-Jihād members with three types of responses to the call of the security officers for writing revisions. The first accepted everything that the security officers wanted; the second rejected the mere idea of revisions and refused to make any concessions, and the third, led by Faḍl, accepted to make the revisions on the condition that they would write whatever they wanted without intervention from the prison authorities. Munīb added that even though the security officers acted favourably to those who accepted everything, the final selection was in favour of Faḍl because of his scholarly weight. Munīb also noted that the security officers asked Faḍl several times to change parts of the *Wathīqa* but he always refused and insisted on publishing it without any change.⁶⁹¹

Due to this, Faḍl has kept silent on all the issues related to *ḥākimiyya* despite the fact that they are closely related to the core topic of the *Wathīqa*. If he had spoken about them he would have mentioned his old view and would have still been perceived as a fundamentalist; therefore, the incentive to obtain release for himself and his fellow jihadists would be rendered unlikely.⁶⁹² This is also why he over-criticised jihadists and did not criticise the Egyptian regime.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 27-8.

⁶⁹¹ Munīb, *Murāj'āt al-Jihādiyyīn*, 13-15.

⁶⁹² Ibrahim, "Jihadists Quit Violence," 27-8.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of Faḍl's new framing of jihad, forced *ḥisba*, *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr*, rebellion, targeting civilians in 'Muslims' lands', *dhimmīs*, attacking tourists and foreigners, attacking non-Muslims in their lands, *tatarrus*, killing non-Muslim civilians in lands of disbelief, and Muslims living in 'lands of disbelief'. It has proven by textual evidence from Faḍl's writings that Faḍl's 'revisions' are not genuine as he has not changed the core beliefs that justify violence even though he has argued that violence is not currently a suitable option. He merely shifted the focus of his arguments from the issues that he places in the static side of the Sharia such as *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* into the operational issues that he classifies in the flexible side of the Sharia where he can provide new deductions based on the principles of incapacity and harm and benefit. Thus, he kept silent or overgeneralised on issues that pertain to *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* and spoke in detail about operational issues such as jihad, forced *ḥisba* and rebellion, which he prohibited due to incapacity and the associated harms. These findings and the textual-frame analysis employed to arrive at them are unique to this study. They also prove that frames can sometimes be manipulated to mask true ideological intent.⁶⁹³

The shift in the focus of arguments entailed a similar change in the major frames. So the previous creedal central frames of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* were replaced with the new *Uṣūlī* central frames of incapacity, harm and benefit and general principles of the Sharia. This brought about a different methodology to Faḍl's framing, which is the methodology of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* that is used to deal with juristic operational issues. However, though the change of the methodology entailed a change in the nature of the sources, Faḍl held to the old classical sources of the Salaf and refused to use any modern sources, which suggests that he is still working within the Salafi parameters and has not moved to any other school or typology.

By proving that Faḍl's ideological revisions are not genuine and that the best description that can be accrued to them is a call for temporary 'behavioural disengagement', the arguments of this chapter establish that the long-heated controversy among observers, analysts and media figures (discussed in chapter 2) on whether Faḍl's 'revisions' or changes represent his own convictions or are product of torture and coercion, is of no real value given the fact that there is no real ideological change to discuss if it is based on conviction or a product of torture. What

⁶⁹³ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 208.

really needs to be addressed is whether or not there is a genuine change in the ideology, which has been achieved in this chapter. The conclusions of this chapter also prove the efficiency of the textual approach compared with other causal and structural approaches as the textual approach could verify the authenticity and degree of change in the ideology which other structural and political process approaches could not. The textual arguments in the following two chapters on the IG will enhance this premise and prove how the textual approach can explain that which other approaches cannot.

Chapter Five: The IG Ideology before Revisions

Introduction

This chapter outlines the arguments of the IG on the concepts used to theologically justify violence in the pre-revisions stage. The following chapter will highlight and analyse the IG anti-violence arguments to explore the general features of each stage. The conclusion will trace the dynamics and tools of change and will answer the main question: How could the IG leaders change support and then retract violence using Sharia-based arguments in both cases?

Thus, this chapter seeks to answer two main questions. First: What were the religious theological concepts and justifications upon which the IG leaders founded their violent ideology and how did they frame and interpret them? Second: What were the general features at that stage and how did they lead to violence? These will be answered by presenting a detailed overview of the IG ideology before revisions and an explanation of these concepts and how they are employed to frame and support violence. The chapter will show that the IG pre-revisions theological views practically targeted three main categories of people: Muslim rulers and those who work for them, foreign and local non-Muslims and other Muslim groups. The chapter will also show, in theological textual terms, how the IG arrived at its pro-violence views by focusing mainly on dogmatic issues in classical Salafi literature and transferring the rulings contained therein into contemporary reality without sufficient attention being paid to the differences in times or contexts as well as a lack of consideration concerning the consequences and outcomes of their actions.

It is worth reminding the reader here that it was the historical IG leaders who either individually authored or co-authored the literature on non-violence and some of them authored most of the literature on violence. The IG leaders who were in Egyptian prisons at the time of the initiative are those who instigated the non-violence initiative and wrote the literature. These are Karam Zuhdī, Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, ‘Alī al-Sharīf, ‘Āṣim ‘Abd al-Mājid, Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, ‘Iṣām Darbāla, Usāma Ḥāfiẓ and Fu’ād al-Dawālīb.⁶⁹⁴ These leaders constitute what is known as the IG *Shūrā*

⁶⁹⁴ These are the leaders who participated in drafting the literature on both violence and revisions as they were imprisoned inside Egypt. However, the founding members of the IG Consultative Council included, in addition to those leaders, Ṭal’at Fu’ād Qāsim, Usāma Rushdī, Ṣalāḥ Ḥāshim, Ṣabrī al-Banna and Rifā’ī Ṭāha. See Ṭal’at Fu’ād Qāsim interview in Hisham Mubarak, “What does the Gama’a Islamiyya Want? An Interview with Tal’at Fu’ad Qasim,” *Middle East Report* (No. 198. [January- March 1996]), 40. The profiles of these leaders and their collective actions, tactics and roles are provided in chapter 2. Some of this material will be recalled here in the main text, when necessary.

Council. All the above leaders were jailed since Sadat's murder until after revisions.⁶⁹⁵ Moreover, the IG leaders did not produce any literature when they were free, before the assassination of Sadat. They relied solely on preaching and disseminating small pamphlets quoting some classical fatwas, like those of Ibn Taymiya on the Tartars, and applying these fatwas to contemporary reality. This was partly due to their preoccupation with practical tactics because of the continual nature of the government's surveillance and pursuit of them which left them with no opportunity to lay the theoretical foundations of their thoughts in written literature.⁶⁹⁶

Thus, the IG leaders only produced literature in jail when they were able express their thoughts in writing. Simultaneously, extensive lessons that were given to the members. As most of the leaders were imprisoned from 1981 until after the revisions, the books were written by these leaders inside prison under severe repressive conditions. The main authors at that time were Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, 'Iṣām Darbāla and 'Āṣim 'Abd al- Mājīd who were all imprisoned.⁶⁹⁷ This literature included books like *Mīthāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, *Al-Qawl al-Qāṭi' fīman Imtana'a 'an al-Sharā'i'*, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha* and *Al-Risāla al-Līmāniyya fī al-Muwālāh* (The Līmānī Treatise on Allegiance).⁶⁹⁸

The most important and the most comprehensive of these books is *Mīthāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī* (Charter of Islamic Action) which was first released in 1984 and carried the name of the IG as a group. It appears from the title that the IG considers this book to be their charter and manifesto of working for Islam. The second most important book, also collectively authored, was *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha* (Inevitability of Confrontation) which was also written in prison, in 1987. It considered a confrontation with the regime as an inevitable fact and a duty on all Muslims.

The third book frames and explains the IG view on those who refuse to implement the Islamic Sharia and breach the *ḥākimiyya* of God. It was entitled *Al-Qawl al-Qāṭi' fīman Imtana'a 'an al-Sharā'i'* (The Decisive Say on Those Who Refrain from [Implementing] the Sharia). It was written by 'Iṣām Darbāla and 'Āṣim 'Abd al-Mājīd and first appeared in the late 1980s. *Al-Risāla al-Līmāniyya fī al-Muwālāh* (The Līmānī Treatise on *Walā'*) also appeared towards the late 1980s

⁶⁹⁵ Ashour, "A world without Jihad," 96-7.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 9-10.

⁶⁹⁷ Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 104.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 10.

and was written by Ṭal'at Fu'ād Qāsim who was freed from prison later and managed to flee Egypt to Europe. The treatise framed the IG view of *al-walā' wa al-barā'* and how they can bring about disbelief.⁶⁹⁹ Another book on *ḥisba* was written by the second-in-line commander 'Abd al-Ākhir Ḥammād who entitled it: *Jawāz Taghyīr al-Munkar bi al-Yadd li Āḥād al-Ra'iyya* (Permissibility of Changing Evil with Hand (force) for individual subjects). The book was first released in 1988. These are the books that laid the **theological** foundations of the concepts that were used to justify violence by the IG.

However, there was another genre of books that did not present theological debates on these issues. Instead, they either highlighted the injustices of the regime, such as the book titled *Shāhid 'alā Jarā'im al-Niẓām al-Miṣrī* (A Witness on the Crimes of the Egyptian Regime), which was released in 1992. This book presented the witness of the Egyptian journalist 'Āmir 'Abd al-Mun'im on the subhuman treatment and systematic torture that was afflicted upon the IG detainees when he was imprisoned with them. Another book entitled *Maṣra' Tāghiya* (A Tyrant's Demise) presented the IG historical narrative and their view on the assassination of Sadat. After spending a long time in prison and undergoing severe conditions without achieving their goals, the IG wrote a book entitled *Risāla ilā Kull man ya'mal li al-Islām* (A Message to All those who Work for Islam). The book appeared in the early 1990s and was directed to those who were suffering in prison and in hideouts, seeking to encourage them to be steadfast and have the glad tidings of triumph despite hardship and difficulty.

This chapter provides an overview and analysis of the IG views on the jihadi concepts that contributed to violence as presented by their leaders. In doing so it depends mainly on the first genre of books that presented the theological legitimisation of violence based on the theological concepts discussed below. These concepts and frameworks will be arranged according to their importance to the IG dogma and their contribution to violence, as follows: *ḥisba*, *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion, the refraining group and fatwas of Ibn Taymiya, *al-walā' wa al-barā'*, democracy and participation in political life, jihad, relationship with non-Muslims, *jizya* and the attitude towards the 'other' local non-Muslims, *amān*, tourism and the attitude towards the 'other' foreign non-Muslim, and finally the attitude towards 'the other' Muslim. However,

⁶⁹⁹ These two books are no longer available, even online on jihadi websites. However, a detailed summary and critique of these two books can be found in in Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 656-739.

before discussing these concepts the chapter will discuss the means of change approved by the IG.

Views of the IG before Revisions

Means of Change

In their *Mithāq al-ʿAmal al-Islāmī* (Charter of Islamic Action), the IG leaders repeatedly declared that their tools of dealing with reality and enslaving people to their Lord lie in three things: *daʿwa*, *ḥisba* and jihad. *Daʿwa* is for those who are willing to listen. It addresses their hearts and minds with proofs and evidences to change the wrong and false convictions that people believe in. *Ḥisba* deals with Muslim individuals who commit apparent sins and are reluctant to listen to *daʿwa*. 'Jihad' is the only way to deal with those who fight the religion of God and try to implement their own desires and laws. The IG leaders emphasise that the three processes, which constitute the IG prognostic framing of dealing with the reality, must be applied simultaneously.⁷⁰⁰ The fact that the IG saw that the remedy lies in these three means, while Faḍl saw that the remedy lies only in armed rebellion, confirms the observation in some case studies on social movement framing that the prognostic dimension is one of main points in which social movements of similar goals differ from one another.⁷⁰¹

The difference between the three approved means of change is that *daʿwa* is the missionary work taking place in mosques and on various pulpits that is meant to guide Muslims and non-Muslim individuals, telling them about the true teachings of Islam so that they would gain inner faith and Islamic discipline. *Ḥisba* is an on-the-ground action that is generally intended to protect and enhance the moral integrity of the existing Muslim community by preventing apparent sins from being committed. Though it is practised against individuals, its overall outcome ensures the well-being of the entire Muslim community. Jihad will then be used to fight non-Muslim entities whether local 'apostate' regimes, refraining groups, or foreign powers to restore the usurped Sharia and the missing glory of Islam.

The process of linking these three means of change and their related framing concepts to people's needs and aspirations is known as 'frame bridging', which refers to the linking of two or

⁷⁰⁰ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-ʿAmal al-Islāmī*, 56-9.

⁷⁰¹ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 617.

more ideologically harmonious but structurally unconnected frames (such as: *ḥākimiyya* leads to the implementation of the Sharia which restores the glory of the religion and brings justice and welfare) regarding a particular problem or issue through the linkage of a movement organisation and ideas with an un-mobilised sentiment pool or public opinion cluster. This frame-bridging process is part of the strategic efforts made by the IG and al-Jihād to link their interests and interpretive frameworks with those of prospective constituents and actual or prospective resource providers.⁷⁰²

Another strategic process of frame alignment that is applied by the IG, and is close to frame-bridging, is known as ‘frame extension’, which portrays the group’s interests and frames as extending beyond their primary interests to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be of importance to potential adherents.⁷⁰³ The difference between this and frame-bridging is that frame-bridging links the frames to commonly and communally sought principles such as justice, welfare, peace and economic betterment, while frame extension links the main frameworks to the individual or specific group’s needs belonging to actual or potential adherents.⁷⁰⁴

As *da’wa* is not one of the concepts that contribute to violence, it will not be covered here. Only the last two means of change will be covered. *Ḥisba* will be mentioned first as, practically speaking, it is the most important and most practised element in the IG dogma and the one that first alarmed the regime and made it launch its raids against the IG, which later provoked excessive violence from both parties. As discussed in chapter 2, the IG overuse of *ḥisba* in the late 1980s and early 1990s provoked the regime and made it respond by excessive military campaigns, detentions and torture of the IG members.⁷⁰⁵ This in turn provoked IG retaliatory violence against the regime.

The IG leaders themselves confessed that their clash with the regime was “not to implement the Sharia nor to oust and replace the ruler, but was an objection to afflicted oppressions and an

⁷⁰² Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 624.

⁷⁰³ See, e.g., Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 625.

⁷⁰⁴ For example, Maḥmūd Shu’ayb, one of the IG adherents, states that he joined the IG when one of the IG members linked their ideas to his personal needs as he “took interest in me, and even took interest in my personal problems. So I became emotionally dependent on that man.” Maḥmūd Shu’ayb’s interview in Aḥmad, *Mu’āmara am Murāja’a*, 132.

⁷⁰⁵ Al-’Awwā, *Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya*, 116.

attempt to restore lost rights.”⁷⁰⁶ Hence, the main goal behind the clash between the IG and the Egyptian regime was releasing their prisoners and was provoked as a retaliation and reaction to the attacks of the regime⁷⁰⁷ that started mainly because of IG excessive use of *hisba*. When it came to fighting because of the Sharia, the leaders believed in the necessity of fighting and that this fighting would need proper groundwork for which they were preparing. So, the IG conception of jihad, *ḥākimiyya*, rebellion against the apostate ruler and their quest for the implementation of the Sharia remained no more than theoretical concepts in their literature and were not the actual reasons for acts of violence against the state. They were summoned at the stage of confrontations to justify and support the IG practical acts of violence.

In addition, the IG was known much more for *hisba* than for jihad. This is further supported by the fact that some Jihadists consider the IG to be a group of *hisba* rather than that of jihad,⁷⁰⁸ and that members of the IG were sometimes described in some press reports as ‘members of the Group of Enjoining the Right and Forbidding the Wrong’.⁷⁰⁹ Thus, contrary to Faḍl and al-Jihād Organisation, the IG was practically more concerned with *hisba* than with *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion. Therefore, the discussion will start with *hisba*.

Before Revisions: *Hisba*

As *hisba* means enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, it can be done both verbally with tongue and physically with force, and therefore it could lead to violence. So, this section shows how the IG framed in *hisba* and how this led to violence and confrontation. The IG framed in *hisba* to enforce its attempt to monitor the community practices, gender relations, public manners and mores and even to censor cultural products such as public celebrations and films. For them, the use of violence was an acceptable means to apply this injunction.

After mentioning a number of Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions that prove the importance of *hisba*, the IG Charter quotes Ibn Taymiya’s argument that *hisba* is a collective

⁷⁰⁶ Ḥāfiz, *Mubādarat Waqf al-’Unf*, 94; Aḥmad, *Mu’āmara am Murāja’a*, 147.

⁷⁰⁷ For more information on this point, see Al-’Awwā, *Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya*, 122 ff.

⁷⁰⁸ Abū Qatāda al-Filistīnī, “Ḥawla Tarāju’āt al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya wa Tarāju’āt Sayyid Imām,” *Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād* (N. P, N. D.), 1.

⁷⁰⁹ Al-’Awwā, *Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya*, 72.

obligation and that it becomes individual obligation⁷¹⁰ if nobody else did it or if the number of Muslims to undertake it in a particular situation is insufficient.⁷¹¹ The implication of considering *ḥisba* a collective obligation is that all of the Muslim community will be sinful and deserves God's punishment if *ḥisba* is not performed properly or if there is not enough participants to undertake it efficiently.

To outline the IG conception of *ḥisba*, the Charter identified and explained the constituent elements of *ḥisba*: the person undertaking *ḥisba* (*al-muhtasib*), the perpetrator (*al-muhtasab 'alayh*), the subject of *iḥtisāb* (*al-muhtasab fīh*) and the act of *iḥtisāb* itself.

The *muhtasib* (the person who makes *ḥisba*) must have the ability to perform *iḥtisāb*. Therefore, those who have physical or incorporeal disability are exempted from making *ḥisba*. An example of incorporeal disability is the fear from unbearable harm that will afflict the *muhtasib*. If such fear exists, *ḥisba* will not be compulsory. However, if a person who will face such harm knows that he can endure the harm, he is encouraged to make *ḥisba* even if the harm is great. This corresponds to the IG pre-revisions line of thought that does not pay much attention to the consequences. Therefore, the leaders were asking the *muhtasib* who will go through great but bearable harm to carry out *ḥisba* and they also stated that the exemption because of harm does not apply to little harm such as verbal abuse or cursing; instead a *muhtasib* has to be prepared to receive this kind of harm and abuse. This constitutes the constraint-lifting strategy of IG framing of *ḥisba*.

A similar line of thought is in the leaders' argument that if the capacity exists but it is more likely that *iḥtisāb* will not yield any benefit, *ḥisba* is still compulsory. "The role of the *muhtasib* is to enjoin and remind not to make people accept what he says."⁷¹² This shows that the IG's pre-revisions approach was characterised by indifference to outcomes and lack of pragmatism,

⁷¹⁰ 'Collective obligation' means an obligation on Muslims collectively but not necessarily on each individual Muslim. In other words, if a sufficient number of Muslims perform this obligation, the rest of Muslims will not be required to perform it, but if the number of Muslims who take part is insufficient to adequately perform that obligation, every individual Muslim will be sinful. The three means of change approved by the IG (jihad, *ḥisba* and *da'wa*) are classified as collective obligations because not everyone has to do them, but only a number of Muslims that is enough to achieve the desirable results of these obligations. 'Individual obligation' means a mandatory action that has to be performed by every capable individual Muslim. The five daily prayers, fasting and pilgrimage are examples of this as every individual Muslim has to observe them.

⁷¹¹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 59

⁷¹² Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 69-70.

which is driven by their general belief that they must perform *ḥisba* and jihad irrespective of the results or consequences.

The IG did not consider appointment by rulers as one of the conditions of the *muḥtasib* even if the ruler is legitimate and recognised. Though the leaders acknowledged that *ḥisba* would ideally be made by a person who is appointed by the ruler, they insisted that this is not a condition the lack of which makes *ḥisba* inapplicable. As the IG perceived current rulers to be apostate, they denied them any legitimacy or authority over Muslims and therefore these rulers were not entitled to appointing any *muḥtasib*: “what is compulsory is ousting them, not asking their permission to perform *iḥtisāb*.”⁷¹³

As the legitimate ruler or imam nowadays is not existent, *ḥisba* must be carried out by others. ‘Others’ here refers to those working in the service of Islam. By implication this refers to members of the IG who should constitute the *ṭalī’a* or vanguard of *ḥisba*.⁷¹⁴ To further support their stance on the necessity of practising *ḥisba* by individuals who are not appointed by the state, the IG devoted a book to *ḥisba* in which the author emphasised the IG view of the permissibility of changing evil with hand to individuals and common people and refuted the view that *ḥisba* should be done only by appointed *muḥtasibs*.⁷¹⁵

The second constituent element of *ḥisba*, the perpetrator (*al-muḥtasab ‘alayh*), is defined as the person who is committing any act that requires compulsory or voluntary *ḥisba*. Such a person does not have to be an adult.⁷¹⁶ This implies that *iḥtisāb* can be practised against children and minors. The third element of *ḥisba* is the subject of *iḥtisāb* (*al-muḥtasab fīh*). This refers to the wrong act that requires intervention of the *muḥtasib*. This wrong or evil act is termed *munkar*, which is broader than sin because if a minor or a child commits a wrong act, such as drinking alcohol, this is wrong (*munkar*) act but is not a sin or disobedience as minors are not taken into account or considered sinners if they do something wrong.⁷¹⁷ For a *munkar* to require *ḥisba*, it has to be agreed upon by scholars that it is *munkar*. Hence, if there is an acceptable

⁷¹³ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 70.

⁷¹⁴ Stein, “Uncivil Partnership,” 869.

⁷¹⁵ ‘Abd al-Ākhir Ḥammād, *Jawāz Taghyīr al-Munkar bi al-Yadd li Āḥād al-Ra’iyya*, (second edition, N.P.: Minbar al-Tawḥīd wa al-Jihād, 1418 AH/ 1995.) First edition was released in 1988.

⁷¹⁶ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 70.

⁷¹⁷ This refers to the Islamic belief that people starts to be accountable for their deeds only when they reach puberty.

disagreement among scholars on whether that act is *munkar* or not, *ḥisba* should not be observed. Invalid or unacceptable opinions should not be considered.⁷¹⁸

Though this condition closes the door of dispute over thousands of acts that Muslim scholars disagree on their rulings, it entails that the *muḥtasib* should not only be knowledgeable of the juristic opinions and debates on the act that may require *ḥisba* but also has the ability to make *ijtihād* and decide if the disagreement on that *munkar* is acceptable or not. As the IG did not condition that the *muḥtasib* must be a scholar or knowledgeable of jurisprudence, this raises the question of: how can a non-scholar *muḥtasib* know that there is disagreement among scholars and, if any, whether it is acceptable or not?

This becomes more problematic given the fact that the overwhelming majority of the IG members are laypeople who did not study Sharia or obtain a degree in Islamic theological or juristic sciences. Most of them were either professionals, graduates or students of scientific subjects such as medicine, engineering, science, etc. Even the leaders themselves were neither graduates of a religious institutions, nor did they receive religious training from any recognised scholar or institution,⁷¹⁹ and therefore they appointed Al-Azhar professor sheikh 'Umar 'Abd al-Raḥmān as their mufti before he fled Egypt. So, the IG members and leaders did not receive proper theological and religious education that would qualify them for making such judgments on religious issues, which undermines their argument on the above point. The lack of proper religious education was reflected in the IG inability to recruit graduates of religious education as well as the apparent discrepancy between their theory and practice as shown below.

Thus IG framed in *ḥisba* to characterise its relationship with and practise authority over the Muslim community. To do so, the ills extant in the community and misconduct of some of its members served as injustice or diagnostic frames, practising of *ih̥tisāb* served as prognostic framing and having a strong, religiously committed Muslim community that deserves the pleasure of God served as the motivational framing. However, the practice veered from theory. An example of discrepancy between theory and practice is the IG statement that *munkar* must exist at the time of *ih̥tisāb*. This means that if the *munkar* is expected and not actually occurring,

⁷¹⁸ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 70-1.

⁷¹⁹ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 81. For example, 'Āsim 'Abd al-Mājid, Usāma Ḥāfiẓ and Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān have bachelors of engineering, Fu'ād al-Dawālībī and 'Alī al-Sharīf have studied commerce. Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm has studied medicine, 'Iṣām Darbāla has a bachelor of arts, and Karam Zuḥdī has a bachelor from the Cooperation Academy in Asyut.

ḥisba cannot be made.⁷²⁰ The fact that members of the IG attacked musical bands before they start their performances and burnt video shops stands as another example where practice diverted from theory.

The condition that the *munkar* must exist at the time of *iḥtisāb* also means that if the *munkar* has already been committed and no longer exists, *ḥisba* should not be practised as *ḥisba* targets only *munkars* that are being done. If the *munkar* has been done, then the punishment should be afflicted by rulers or those whom they appoint and it is not left for common people. However, this condition does not work in reality as the IG considers current rulers to be apostate, which disqualifies them from implementing such punishments.⁷²¹ This leaves the question open on who should implement the punishment in the absence of the legitimate ruler? It seemed that the IG, in practice, has undertaken this task when it started enforcing its rules and regulations on the areas where it had strong existence, which reveals another aspect of discrepancy between theory and practice.

Another example of discrepancy between theory and practice is their statement that for *ḥisba* to be implemented, the *munkar* must be apparent not hidden, and that the *muḥtasib* is not allowed to spy to find a *munkar*.⁷²² This theoretical condition is contradicted by the practice of the IG members who used to stop men walking in the streets with women and ask for a proof that they are married or relatives. Though the wrong implementation of the IG theory of *ḥisba* reflected discrepancy between theory and practice, both theory and practice were meant to enhance public manners and religious commitment, which explains how framing concepts like *ḥisba* drew on cultural currents and practices regarding the public manners and traditions, gender relations, the family, and corruption caused by the media and modern cultural products.

The IG doctrine of *ḥisba*, despite the restrictions laid in this regard, was described⁷²³ as a doctrine of revolution given the IG's approach of *jāhiliyya* towards the larger Egyptian society. In other words, as *ḥisba* was historically intended to rectify deviant behaviours, and the IG considered much of Egyptian society to have lapsed into *jāhiliyya*, the conservative aspect of

⁷²⁰ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 70-1.

⁷²¹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 70-1.

⁷²² Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 71.

⁷²³ Stein, "Uncivil Partnership," 869.

ḥisba fell down and it became a doctrine for cultural revolution.⁷²⁴ However, depicting the IG as a group that considered the majority of the society as *jāhili* lacks evidence from their writings and actions. In fact, there is nothing in the IG writings or statements, before or after revisions, that depicts the society of *jāhiliyya*. Accusing the society of *jāhiliyya* was a charge that was cast upon the IG by their detractors and pro-regime media. As will be shown in this chapter the IG considers only the regime and its positive laws as *jāhili* but not common people or the society itself. To the contrary, the IG is known to be a social group that interacts with people and provides them with services and social care. Moreover, the IG leaders and members persistently negate that charge and insist that they mix with people and do not question their faith or consider them to be inferior Muslims.⁷²⁵

The fourth element of *ḥisba* is the act of *iḥtisāb* itself. This should follow, when having the capacity, a series of escalating steps that start with informing the wrongdoer that his action is *munkar*. The second step is to advise him and remind him of God and His severe punishment. Steps 1 and 2 should be done with lenience and gentleness. Step 3 involves reproaching the wrongdoer with harsh words. However, the reproach must be with hard words that are permissible in the Sharia and should not involve any impermissible or taboo words and should not be overdone. The fourth step is to change the wrong with force (*al-taghyīr bi al-yadd*), e.g., to spill the wine or break musical instruments. This must be done by the *muḥtasib* only if he cannot force the owner of the *munkar* objects to destroy them himself. This also should be restricted to what is necessary and should not extend to other permissible stuff.⁷²⁶

The fifth step is to threaten the culprit of an action against himself. Threatening must be with permissible things only and the *muḥtasib* must not threaten the culprit with anything that is impermissible in the Sharia. The sixth step is to hit the culprit with hand, feet or any other means. This also must be restricted to the necessary amount and must not be overdone. If hitting will cause each party to summon his relatives and supporters for a fight, the IG leaders state two opinions. The first is that this can be done by individuals and the second view says that

⁷²⁴ Stein, "Uncivil Partnership," 869.

⁷²⁵ See, e.g., 'Abd al-Ākhir Ḥammād, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya wa al-Khuṣūma ma'a al-Mujtama'," the IG Website: <http://www.egyig.com/Public/articles/mobadra/6/36422069.shtml> (accessed 24 September 2013). The excuse due to ignorance was utilised by the IG to exempt soldiers and supporters of the regime (members of the refraining group), not common people, from being judged as apostate, because ignorance (*jahl*) is one of the impediments that prevent applying the general theoretical ruling of apostasy to individuals. Furthermore, *jahl* must not be confused with *jāhiliyya* as the former means ignorance while the latter mostly refers to disbelief.

⁷²⁶ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 71-2.

this can be done only by rulers and needs their permission.⁷²⁷ Again, these escalating steps were not observed by the IG members when practising *ḥisba*, which reveals further discrepancy between theory and practice. This is partly because implementing all of these steps would require special training and detailed knowledge of the Sharia, which was not available to the IG members. This also contradicts the IG previous statement that *ḥisba* could be made by laypeople.

As *ḥisba* places restrictions on people's freedom, the IG tried to make it culturally resonant by associating it with public and communal benefit and linking it to the concept of harm and benefit. The IG notes that if any of the above-mentioned steps will result in harm or evil that is greater than the *munkar* or will result in missing a greater benefit, the *ḥisba* should not be done and if it is observed the *muḥtasib* will be sinner as his action resulted in greater harm. If the culprit is doing something good and something bad at the same time and they cannot be separated, the *muḥtasib* must look at which of the two is greater. If the good action is greater, the *muḥtasib* must command the *muḥtasab* 'alayah to do it even if this will bring about a minor *munkar*. Forbidding the small *munkar* in that case becomes impermissible. If the *munkar* is greater, it must be forbidden by the *muḥtasib*. If they are equal, the *muḥtasib* must stay silent without commanding right or forbidding evil.⁷²⁸

Though the IG leaders stipulated that the harm and benefit must be determined in accordance with the scale of the Sharia, they did not give any details on what kind of skill or training would entitle the *muhtasibs* to know or determine that any of the above steps can cause greater harm than the *munkar* or lead to missing a greater benefit. If this requires religious knowledge or skill, the overwhelming majority of the IG members do not have this, and if this is left to the discretion of the *muḥtasib*, personal judgements vary and perceptions of the beneficial or harmful and which is greater than the other also vary from a person to person.

Another discrepancy between the IG theory and practice of *ḥisba* is reflected in one of the examples the leaders gave on the *munkar* that can be changed with force. They mentioned musical instruments as a *munkar* that can be changed by force, and the way to change this is to destroy these instruments. While they stated before that *ḥisba* must be observed only in things

⁷²⁷ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 72.

⁷²⁸ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 72.

that scholars agree that they are *munkar*, it is well known that Muslim scholars disagree on whether or not music is permissible.⁷²⁹ Thus the condition that there must be no disagreement among scholars on considering the subject of *ih̥tisāb* as *munkar* was not practically observed in this and similar examples, which further reveals the divergence between theory and practice.

The Charter then started to counter-frame opponent's anticipated objections to the IG framing of *hisba* and its application in current times. The leaders argued that the *muhtasib* does not have to be an upright Muslim, even disobedient and rebellious Muslims can practise *hisba*. This is again problematic in light of the fact that the *muhtasib* should be able to judge the harm and benefit and which is greater in addition to having the required knowledge to determine if the *munkar* is agreed upon or not and if the disagreement is acceptable or not.

The leaders also counter-framed the objection that *hisba* should be done only by a *muhtasib* that is appointed by rulers. As the Prophet encouraged people to advise their rulers and rectify any deviant behaviour rulers might do, nobody can claim that those people would need permission from rulers to make *hisba* against them. The Charter also rejects the notion that *hisba* should be organised only by the Islamic top authority which is the Caliphate. God says, "And Let there be amongst you an Ummah who invites to good and enjoins what is right and forbids the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful" [Quran 3:104]. According to the IG pre-revisionist interpretation of this verse, *hisba* is requested from the Muslim Ummah in general whether they have a caliph or not, and this Ummah will never cease to exist even if the political power stops to be in their hands. These claims, the Charter notes, are without foundations in jurisprudence or Prophetic traditions. Indeed, the leaders emphasise, *hisba* is even more pressing in the absence of a Muslim caliph.⁷³⁰ The IG devotion of a comprehensive book⁷³¹ to this point reveals how essential this issue was to them, for if this point had not been framed and substantiated enough, all of their acts of *hisba* that were not authorised by the state would have been considered impermissible under the Sharia.

The Charter also responds to the claim that *hisba* must be temporarily set aside so that the powers and efforts of Muslims would be gathered for fighting the greatest *munkar* which is the apostate rulers who replaced the Sharia and for implementing the greatest injunction which is

⁷²⁹ See, e.g. Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī, *Al-Halāl wa al-Harām fī al-Islām* (Cairo, Maktabat Wahba, 1997), 261.

⁷³⁰ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 74-6.

⁷³¹ Ḥammād, *Jawāz Taghyīr al-Munkar*.

the Islamic Sharia itself. While conceding that these are of top importance, the IG leaders insisted that the *ḥisba* and jihad are complementary of each other and not contradictory and that is why they must be observed simultaneously. Thus, the Charter renounces the philosophy of some jihadi groups, such as al-Jihād Organisation, that *da'wa* and *ḥisba* should be delayed until the apostate regimes is overthrown and a legitimate ruler appointed. Setting aside this top important Islamic imperative, the leaders argue, 'would benefit only the infidel *jāhilī* regimes'.⁷³²

The above argument of discrepancy between the IG theory and practice was confirmed by the leaders in several interviews wherein they admitted that the action of the members diverted from theory in many cases where force was overly used and some people were killed or injured. This was particularly the case in the late 1980s and early 1990s when the contact between imprisoned leaders and members was almost unattainable due to strict security measures in prisons.⁷³³ However, the above demonstration shows that deviation of practice from theory cannot be ascribed to the lack of communication alone. When it comes to *ḥisba*, this is also because of the lack of the necessary training and qualifications that would entitle members of the IG to properly observe the theoretical criteria and regulations of *ḥisba* set in this regard.

Before Revisions: *Ḥākimiyya*, *Takfīr* and Rebellion.

As previously explained, the concepts of *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion are interlinked. Rebellion cannot be theologically justified unless the ruler is deemed apostate and *ḥākimiyya* is the main concept used to judge the ruler as apostate. Therefore, *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* are necessary to frame and rationalise any violent act against the ruler or the regime. Before revisions, the classified the ruler as apostate mainly because he did not implement the Sharia. Regimes that do not rule with Sharia are, in the IG view, '*jāhilī*' 'apostate' regimes. Depending on a literal interpretation of the verses of *ākimīyya*, the IG leaders considered rulers apostate because they substituted the laws of God with secular ones and refused to implement the Sharia. Thereby these rulers were considering themselves as deities with God, as Allah the exalted says, "Or do they have other deities who have ordained for them a religion to which Allah has not consented?" [Qur'an 42:21]. These rulers are apostates because Allah stated,

⁷³² Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 76; Stein, "Uncivil Partnership," 870.

⁷³³ This was explained in chapter 2.

“Nay, by your Lord, they will not believe (in truth) until they make you (Muḥammad) judge of what is in dispute between them.” [Qur’an 4:65].⁷³⁴

Rulers have apostatised as they neglected the implementation of the Sharia, which makes it compulsory to fight them to restore the laws of God. The leaders consolidated their view by quoting verses from the Quran which severely threaten those who do not rule according to the Sharia. Examples of this include verse 105 of chapter 4 and verse 40 of chapter 12. After counting Egyptian laws which are at odds with those of the Sharia,⁷³⁵ The leaders concluded that Egypt is full of infidel systems and laws which are clear-cut disbelief and therefore any ruler who implements them has committed apostasy⁷³⁶ This was how the IG articulated its frames, as the leaders assembled, collated and packaged slices of experienced and observed reality (injustices) along with moral directives or callings (religious interpretations) to arrive at their conclusions. The frames were further elaborated and amplified by accenting and highlighting the events, issues, or beliefs under discussion as being more significant than others.

To support this version of reality and interpretation, the leaders quoted a number of fatwas of classical scholars that give similar interpretations. Because Muslims agree on overthrowing the ruler if he apostatises, removing these infidel regimes is therefore compulsory.⁷³⁷ Thus, framing rebellion against rulers was justified using the creedal concept of *ḥākimiyya* coated in practical pieces of reality (injustices). Therefore, the leaders emphasise that restoring the Sharia is not possible except by removing the apostate governments that bar this and replacing them with an Islamic caliphate which would be established on the fact that only the laws of God are the ones to be followed and implemented.⁷³⁸ Thus, as with Faḍl, for the IG view on rulers and governance, *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* represented the diagnostic or injustice framing, rebellion the prognostic framing and establishing Caliphate and implementing the Islamic rule the motivational framing. Though Quṭb’s writings were not directly used, it is obvious that almost all of the IG arguments on the *ḥākimiyya* and the *jāhiliyya* are based on those of Quṭb.⁷³⁹ This is not only proven by the similarity of the IG arguments in this regard to those of Quṭb but also by direct acknowledgement of this by Ṭal’aṭ Fu’ād Qāsim who is one of the IG leaders. In his

⁷³⁴ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 10-12& 22 ff; Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 30-1..

⁷³⁵ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 13-24.

⁷³⁶ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 24; Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 31.

⁷³⁷ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 25-31.

⁷³⁸ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 56-7.

⁷³⁹ Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 32.

interview with Hisham Mubarak, Qāsim plainly stated that the IG leaders studied the writings of Quṭb and that the ideas of Quṭb influenced not only the IG but also all of those interested in jihad throughout the Islamic World.⁷⁴⁰ The views and interpretations of the IG intersect with those of Quṭb in that both were written in jail under harsh repressive and inhumane circumstances.⁷⁴¹ Also, a close examination of the IG extended views and arguments on apostasy of rulers due to *ḥakimiyya* reveals that these views and arguments are almost the same as those of Faḍl and that both employ a mixture of Quṭbian and classical interpretations of *ḥakimiyya* to frame their ideas and arrive at their conclusions.

So, ideologically speaking, Jihadists derived their views and interpretations from both classical and one modern sources. Interpretations and views of the Salafi classical scholars, more particularly Ibn Taymiya, concerning those who neglect the implementation of the Sharia, constitute the old and classical source form which Jihadists derived their views and legitimacy. Modern interpretations of the notions of *ḥakimiyya* and *jāhiliyya* as framed by al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb who introduced political interpretations of these concepts, constitute the modern resource from which Jihadists derived their views and interpretations.⁷⁴² The classical heritage granted modern sources the Salafi appeal which accredited them and guaranteed to the followers that they are not deviating from the path of the Salaf. On the other hand, modern sources supplied the classical ones with the tools and language of the modern age, especially concerning *ḥakimiyya* that was never subjected to such an extensive and enhanced discussion in such a political sense in the classical Islamic writings as it was in the writings of Quṭb and similar Salafi Jihadists. The two sources were coined within an encapsulating framework of sociocultural and religious injustices to form what is now known as Salafi Jihadism.⁷⁴³ This confirms Tarrow's assertion that "the symbols of revolt are not drawn like musty costumes from a cultural closet and arrayed before the public. Nor are new meanings unrolled out of whole cloth. The costumes of revolt are woven from a blend of inherited and invented fibres into collective action frames in confrontation with opponents and elites."⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴⁰ Qāsim in Mubarak, "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want," 41.

⁷⁴¹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 32.

⁷⁴² Kamāl Ḥabīb, "Khibrat Tanẓīm al-Jihād fī al-Murāja'āt," in Ḍiyā' Rashwān, ed., *Al-Murāja'āt min al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād* (Cairo: Markaz al-Ahrām li al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Istirātiyya, 2008), 59.

⁷⁴³ Ḥabīb, "Khibrat Tanẓīm al-Jihād," 59; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 11.

⁷⁴⁴ Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 118.

As the views of both the IG and Faḍl are almost identical on the reason why they consider rulers apostate, no further details will be given on the IG interpretation of these concepts. However, the IG leaders differ from Faḍl in their refusal to extend charges of apostasy to the soldiers and helpers of rulers, whom they consider as refraining group, because they cannot make sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments and because they excuse them due to their ignorance.

Moreover, to the IG, *ḥākimiyya*, is not the only major concern as it is for Faḍl, which is reflected in the space given for the concept in the writings of both. The IG did not link most of other things to *ḥākimiyya* as Faḍl did. Thus, though the motivational framing of the IG is similar to that of al-Jihād, they vary in the scope and number of their diagnostic and prognostic framing. This confirms the assertion that “collective action frames may vary in the degree to which they are relatively exclusive, rigid, inelastic, and restricted or relatively inclusive, open, elastic, and elaborated in terms of the number of themes or ideas they incorporate and articulate. Hypothetically, the more inclusive and flexible collective action frames are, the more likely they are to function as or evolve into ‘master frames’.”⁷⁴⁵

Framing researchers assert that the range of collective action frames of most movements encompasses only a set of related problems and is limited to the interests of a particular group. However, some collective action frames are very broad in terms of their scope, which allows them to function as a kind of master algorithm that shapes and restricts the orientations and activities of other movements.⁷⁴⁶ Therefore, terms like jihad, caliphate, and supremacy of Islam serve as master (motivational) frames for both organisations as well as for all Jihadist movements in general.

Before Revisions: The Refraining Group and Fatwas of Ibn Taymiya

To emphasise the obligation of rebellion against the local regime and frame and legitimise violence against regime supporters such as army soldiers and police officers which were not classified as apostate as per the IG dogma due to the lack of fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments, the IG did the same as Faraj who quoted the fatwas of Ibn Taymiya on the Mongols and ‘the refraining group’ and transferred the rulings contained therein to modern

⁷⁴⁵ Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 618.

⁷⁴⁶ Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” 618-19.

regimes, soldiers, and rulers' helpers.⁷⁴⁷ The IG classified the Egyptian government as a refraining group because it declined to implement many of the rulings of the Sharia. Because the IG saw that religion must be implemented in full as it means full submission and obedience to God. Therefore, it argued that if regime declined to implement even few rulings of the Sharia, it would be assigning part of the religion to God and part of it to others, which is an act of apostasy. Therefore, the regime must be fought as God states, "And fight them until there is no sedition and [until] the religion, all of it, is for God." [Qur'an 8:39]. So fighting is compulsory whether all of the religion was abandoned or part of it. There is no difference in this regard between applying all of the rites of the religion or some of them, even if few. Therefore, fighting the Egyptian regime, which abandons many of the rulings of the Sharia, is compulsory. God warns the believers that they will face destruction if jihad against those who abandon the rites of Islam is neglected.⁷⁴⁸

The arguments of the IG in this regard highlight an important characteristic in the IG pre-revisions ideology. The IG wanted everything and every single Islamic law to be applied and it would be willing to fight a state that applied even most of the Islamic injunctions but did not apply one or more rulings. The IG would invoke old fatwas of classical Salafi scholars whom it always quoted and preferred but would not take into consideration any kind of challenges, obstacles or circumstances that might have prevented the state from applying a specific ruling of the Sharia. All the arguments looked merely at the texts while paying no attention to differences of time and contexts, difference of realities or practical difficulties that might have caused some rulings to be suspended.

An example of this is replacing the 'Umarī conditions of *dhimma* with principles of citizenship that pay Christian subjects of Muslim lands equal treatment with Muslims. The IG looked at this as a suspension of the texts of the Sharia in this regard without paying attention to the differences between the time of 'Umar and the twentieth century, to the new world order and the international pressures on Muslim countries to treat their citizens equally. This, however, has changed in the new thought; and change of circumstances and world pressures were among the major frames upon which the IG leaders relied in revoking their old ideology.

⁷⁴⁷ As explained before, Ibn Taymiya stated that that any group which stops implementing one of the rituals of the Islamic Sharia has to be fought until it returns to the implementation of that ritual. The war led by the first Muslim caliph Abū Bakr (d. 13 A.H.) against those who declined to pay Zakat is the most significant quoted example of fighting against a refraining group.

⁷⁴⁸ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 31-2; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 32-3.

The difference between the IG and Faḍl in their framing of the concept of the refraining group is that the IG did not consider individual members of this group, with exception of the ruler, to be apostate as long as they did not deny (make *jaḥd* of) the obligation of the Islamic rite they stopped to observe. However, they lifted the constraints on fighting them by emphasising that members of this group who assist rulers in their apostasy and relinquishment of the Sharia of God must be fought even if they do not deny the ruling they are reluctant to implement, even if they cannot be classified as apostate, even if there is no Muslim ruler or caliph to lead Muslims in their fight against this group, even if the ruler is the leader of that group, and even if they do not initiate fighting.⁷⁴⁹

In addition, whoever helps them will be fought as well even if he is forced to fight with them. Muslims must not stop fighting them until they make sure that they have observed the rite(s) which they neglected. Fighting this group, the leaders note, is not the same as fighting rebels (*qitāl al-bughāh*) as the rebels revolt against the Muslim caliph or ruler while this group rebels against the rites of the Sharia. Thus, fighting them is of the same kind as fighting the Khawārij and those who refused to pay zakat. By this, the IG and other jihadi groups, facilitated framing in this concept and lifted the constraint by reversing the order of the classical concept that stipulates that 'the state' is the one to fight the 'refraining group'. The IG reversed the order by arguing that they 'the group' are the ones that should fight 'the state', considering the state to be a 'group' and positioning itself in place of the state.⁷⁵⁰

All of this does not make this group apostate, however. A ruling of *takfīr* is issued only if they deny the rite which they stopped to observe (*jaḥd*). In this case, they will be considered apostate and Muslims must fight them until they come back to the religion or get killed all of them. Even if the group was considered apostate because of *jaḥd*, each individual member of that group cannot be considered apostate except after the fulfilment of the conditions and absence of impediments.⁷⁵¹ As a practical implementation of the concept of the refraining group, IG, two days after Sadat's assassination, framed in this concept to justify the attacking

⁷⁴⁹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 33.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 33.

⁷⁵¹ This is the summary of a research the IG has conducted in this regard and documented in a book that argues for the necessity of fighting the group that refrains from observing one or more of the rites of Islam. This book is known as '*Al-Qawl al-Qāṭi fīman Imtana'a 'an al-Sharā'i*'. I could not find a copy of that book, but its main points were mentioned and criticised by Faḍl in his *al-Jāmi'*, pp. 656-65. It was also summarised by al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya leaders in their book, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha*, pp. 31-2.

Asyut Security Administration and killing large number of soldiers and police officers as they considered them members of the refraining group.⁷⁵²

The IG leaders gave no clue or rationale on why they did not treat rulers in the same way they treated their helpers and supporters. Why is the ruler considered apostate even if he did not deny the rites of Islam that he did not observe or consider the things prohibited by the Sharia to be lawful (*jaḥd* and *Istiḥlāl*)? In other words, why would members of the refraining group be considered Muslims if they did not deny what they stopped to observe while their leader not? And why the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments must be observed with them but not with the ruler?

Thus, though both Faḍl and leaders of the IG agree on the necessity of fighting the refraining group, Faḍl sees that every individual member of that group is apostate without the need to make sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments and irrespective of whether they commit *jaḥd* and *Istiḥlāl* or not. Therefore Faḍl sees that they must be fought as ‘apostates’ while the IG sees that they must be fought as a ‘Muslim’ refraining group.⁷⁵³ That is why Faḍl severely criticised leaders of the IG in this regard in his *al-Jāmi’* as they, according to Faḍl, did not make any distinction between sins that require *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl* and those that automatically render their doers apostate without the need for *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl*. “This is a major mistake in creed”, Faḍl notes, “and is the view of excessive among the *Murji’ah*.”⁷⁵⁴

However, contrary to Faḍl’s claim, the IG does draw a distinction between these two types of sins and does not consider *jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl* a condition of *takfīr* in all kinds of sins. The Leaders in their Charter conceded that some sins, such as blasphemy or deliberate desecration of the Quran or the Sunna, automatically lead to apostasy without the need for *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl*.⁷⁵⁵ So Faḍl and the IG agree on the general principle that some sins automatically cause apostasy with or without *jaḥd* or *Istiḥlāl*. The difference between them in this regard is just regarding what

⁷⁵² Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, interview in Aḥmad, *Mu’āmarā am Murāja’a*, 132.

⁷⁵³ There are several practical differences between fighting ‘Muslims’ and fighting ‘apostates’. There are also several different implications between both cases because if a member of the refraining group is considered apostate and killed or even died naturally, his Muslim relatives, wife and children will not inherit him, he will not be buried with Muslims and no Muslim funeral prayer will be made for him.

⁷⁵⁴ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi’*, 664-5. The *Murji’a* is a group that existed since the early days of the Islamic Caliphate and argued that a Muslim’s belief cannot be interrupted by committing any sin whatsoever as long as he has faith in his heart. Contrary to this belief, the *Khawārij* issue a judgement of *takfīr* against any Muslim who commits a major sin. As both the *Murji’ah* and *Khawārij* are considered deviant groups by mainstream Sunni scholars, those who do not issue *takfīr* against rulers and their supporters are depicted by their opposing jihadists as *Murji’a* while those who excessively use *takfīr* are depicted by their detractors as *Khawārij*.

⁷⁵⁵ *Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 24: footnote 2.

kind of sins are included in the category of sins that does not require *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl*. The obvious is that Faḍl considers supporting the apostate ruler as one of the sins that cause immediate apostasy while the IG does not. Thus, Faḍl not only over-criticised the IG for something they did not say, but also classified this to be a creedal rather than juristic mistake and likened their saying to that of the excessive *Murji'ah*.

The IG further supported and granted credibility to their views on the refraining group by quoting a fatwa of Ibn Taymiya in which he opined that fighting the Mongols (Tartars) was compulsory because they did not implement the Sharia but instead followed their scripture 'Yāsā'. Thus, they must be fought even though the majority of them were Muslims and their leaders declared that they embraced Islam. By analogy, as modern heads of Muslim states and their governments replace the Sharia with Western laws, they are similar to the Tartars and therefore have to be fought.⁷⁵⁶ This is in fact the same as the argument developed by Faraj in his *al-Farīḍa al-Ghā'iba*. This approach is also employed in their interpretation of the concept of *al-walā' wa al-barā'*.

Before Revisions: Al-Walā' wa al-Barā'

The IG leaders framed in the concept of *al-walā' wa al-barā'* to express their views on the relationship with Muslims and non-Muslims and to enhance their view of the apostasy of the ruling regimes. The leaders argue that believers are one community and their *walā'* (love and loyalty) is exclusively devoted to God, His Messenger and to one another. What ties Muslims together is only the tie of faith; any other tie, such as blood or marriage relations, national or tribal affiliations, language or ethnic ties—all of these, if considered at the expense of the tie of faith, are ties of *jāhiliyya* and everything that belongs to *jāhiliyya* is under the feet of Islam.⁷⁵⁷ As for *barā'* (disassociation and enmity), it is for those who commit oppression, whether major oppression: the disbelievers, or minor oppression: wrongdoing Muslims. The disbelievers are met with nothing but full hatred and enmity; "Islam defines the attitude of the party of God towards the party of Satan, determines the attitude of the believers towards the disbelievers: it is hatred, enmity and harshness, nothing else."⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁶ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahā*, 31-2; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 33-4.

⁷⁵⁷ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 139-40.

⁷⁵⁸ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 141.

If a Muslim shows loyalty to the disbelievers, the consequence is determined according to the kind of loyalty. Interior heart-driven loyalty constitutes a major disbelief that drives a person outside the fold of Islam. However, exterior loyalty is either a major sin or a minor one, based on the nature of the action committed. An example of exterior loyalty is to give disbelievers some sensitive information about Muslims to obtain a worldly gain while hating them in the heart and adhering to Islam. Regarding the attitude of loyalty and enmity towards wrongdoing Muslims, these must be loved for the good qualities they have and hated for the evil qualities they have. Neither full love nor full hatred is permissible. Love and hatred must be assigned as per the good and bad behaviour of a sinning Muslim.⁷⁵⁹

The IG devoted a pamphlet for detailed discussion of the issue of *muwālāh* (*walā'*) and titled it '*al-Risāla al-Limāniyya fī al-Muwālāh*'.⁷⁶⁰ This pamphlet is in fact complementary to their book on the refraining group. As the IG does not consider members of the refraining group (supporters of apostate rulers) to be apostate as a result of the issue of *ḥākimiyya*, it might consider them apostate because of the interior *walā'*.⁷⁶¹ Thus, the most practical reason why the concept of *muwālāh* is discussed in this pamphlet is to explain how the concept of *walā'* can lead to apostasy of this group **in general**.

As the IG leaders see that interior loyalty to disbelievers (particularly apostate rulers) causes *kufṛ*, they argue that if the support given by members of the refraining group to the apostate regimes is interior heart-driven support, this constitutes disbelief after making sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments. If this support is exterior, then it constitutes a sin and not disbelief. Hence, the theoretical classification of *muwālāh* into exterior and interior one has a practical consequence on those who work for the regime. If this work involves **direct support** to the apostate ruler and his oppression, such as working in the Egyptian police, it causes apostasy if the person who has this kind of work loves it and is satisfied with this *kufṛ*. However, if such a person works to get a worldly gain while his heart is satisfied with faith and hates that *kufṛ* and wishes that it would be removed, he is only sinful, and the degree of his sin is determined by the kind and degree of the support given to the regime.

⁷⁵⁹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 140-2.

⁷⁶⁰ Ṭal'at Fu'ād Qāsim, *Al-Risāla al-Limāniyya fī al-Muwālāh*, in Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 704-49. Though the book is ascribed to only one of the IG leaders, the introduction of the book states clearly that it is collectively approved by IG leaders and that all the views expressed in the book are those of the IG as a group.

⁷⁶¹ The author defined *muwālāh* as "support, love, honouring, respect and being with the beloved in an interior or exterior manner." P.9. This means that any kind of exterior or interior support, love, honouring, respect from a Muslim to a non-Muslim constitutes the forbidden *muwālāh*.

However, the IG added a third category in which it would be allowed, even recommended, to work for the regime. It is when working there would achieve a Sharia-approved benefit or thwart anticipated harm.⁷⁶² The IG added this third category to exclude members of Islamist movements who work in the army or the police to clandestinely support Islamist movement. Example would be 'Abbūd al-Zumur and Sadat's assassins. By implication, this means that Muslims cannot work as employees to non-Muslim governments, whether apostate rulers or followers of other religions, as this will be classified as either exterior or interior *muwālāh*, unless there is a Sharia-approved benefit from that. Earning one's livelihood is not mentioned as one of the approved reasons. This can also be inferred from the example given by the IG when they considered Prophet Joseph's work for the king of Egypt as exterior *muwālāh* but acceptable as there was a Sharia-approved benefit from that work.⁷⁶³

This too mirrors a general feature of the IG writings at this stage, which is considering the text only without paying attention to the difference of conditions and circumstances and difference of times and places. They, for example, did not pay attention to people's need for work and the fact that if people stop working for the government, many of them won't be able to earn their bread, which reflects the IG separation from reality and their endeavour to impose theory over the existing reality.

Thus, the only reason (*manāṭ*) for considering the refraining group (in general) apostate in the sight of the IG is their interior *walā'* to apostate rulers, and this general ruling of apostasy (*Takfīr muṭlaq*) cannot be extended to any individual member (*Takfīr al-mu'ayyan*) of that group except after making sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments. Thus the Egyptian regime in general, including state security personnel, can be described as *kāfir* if they have interior *walā'* but this does not extend to any individual member of the regime, with exception of the head of the state, except after considering the conditions and impediments of *takfīr* with every individual member of that group.⁷⁶⁴

The practical implication of conditioning the fulfilment of conditions and impediments by the IG is that they will not be able to issue a ruling of *takfīr* against individual members of this group

⁷⁶² Qāsim, *Al-Risāla al-Limāniyya*, 30-8; Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 704.

⁷⁶³ Qāsim, *Al-Risāla al-Limāniyya*, 27. Ironically, Faḍl responded to this point and said that Prophet Joseph's work for the Egyptian king was not *muwālāh* but a type of help and help to non-Muslims is permissible unless it involves something impermissible, support against Muslims or support to non-Muslims' disbelief. Only in these cases it would be classified as *muwālāh*. Faḍl, *A-Jāmi'*, 730.

⁷⁶⁴ Qāsim, *Al-Risāla al-Limāniyya*, 37-8; Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 726.

because of their inability to make sure of the fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments. This is one of the major differences between the IG and Faḍl in this regard and this is perhaps the reason why Faḍl rejects this obstacle and insists that when a group is very powerful, as in the case of the regime supporters, fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments must not be observed. Furthermore, Faḍl sees that there are three reasons each of which is enough to declare supporters of rulers as apostate. These are: 1- their *walā'* to the apostate *kāfir* rulers, 2- their fighting for the sake of *ṭāghūt*;⁷⁶⁵ 3- their hostility towards God, His Prophet and His religion. If they escape the first reason, the second is enough to declare their apostasy and if they escape the second the third is enough, but they actually, Faḍl insists, fall under all of the three categories.⁷⁶⁶

Another difference is that Faḍl does not differentiate between interior and exterior *muwālāh* when it comes to *takfīr* as the IG does. According to Faḍl, both interior and exterior *muwālāh* cause apostasy. Furthermore, Faḍl sees that fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments must not be observed with members of the refraining group because they refrain by their power from yielding to Muslims and thus are too strong to be subjugated by Muslims.⁷⁶⁷ That is why Faḍl extensively responded to the IG arguments in this pamphlet and counter-framed their arguments his *al-Jāmi'*, describing the IG with harsh descriptions.⁷⁶⁸

Before Revisions: Modern Means of Change: Democracy and Participation in Political Life

The consideration of *da'wa*, *ḥisba* and jihad as the only acceptable ways of change means that any other way is rejected. By confining means and tools of change to the above three, the IG leaders are excluding modern ways of change, being *jāhili*, such as the democratic process, participation in parliaments and political parties, even though these are considered legal and acceptable means of changes to other Islamic movements such as the MB. Other ways of change are described as 'heretic' for God has not enjoined or prescribed them. Thus, all means of change presented by the 'infidel regime' through its institutions and systems and according to its principles and ways as tools of action or means of change are vetoed as they belong to

⁷⁶⁵ This term is used by Faḍl to describe both rulers who replace the Sharia as well as the laws which replace the Sharia.

⁷⁶⁶ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 689-90.

⁷⁶⁷ This has been explained in detail in chapter 3.

⁷⁶⁸ Faḍl, *Al-Jāmi'*, 704-49.

jāhiliyya.⁷⁶⁹ Therefore the IG wrote a study titled '*Al-Ḥaraka al-Islāmiyya wa al-'Amal al-Siyāsī*' (Islamist Movement and Political Work) in which it criticised Islamists, particularly the MB, who joined the parliament in 1986 and argued, using similar points to those outlined above, against working within the established institutions of the apostate *jāhilī* regime.⁷⁷⁰

Full reliance on texts alone and rejection of coping with new developments are distinctive characteristics of the IG approach before revisions that are evident in their rejection of modern tools of change for they were not supported by texts from the Sharia. The leaders emphasised that Islam has identified the means its followers have to pursue to achieve victory and establish the religion, and therefore it is unacceptable that followers of Islam borrow other ways made by *jāhiliyya* and then claim that they are trying to establish the religion and achieve its ends. "Doing this is instead supportive of the *jāhiliyya* in its bid to achieve its goals and ends. It is no more than deviating from the path of Islam to join or come in line with the ends and goals of *jāhiliyya*," the leaders emphasise, "means in Islam are not different from the Sharia nor are they a secondary matter that can be changed while keeping other Islamic features and characteristics intact."⁷⁷¹

By equating means of change to the Sharia itself, the IG leaders are practically classifying tools and means of change in the static side of the Sharia that is not prone to change or modification. Therefore, the IG leaders clearly state that "Islam can never continue if we change its creed or rituals, nor can it continue if we change its ways and tools of handling matters. The former is the same as the latter and there is no difference whatsoever."⁷⁷² The IG leaders even reject the mere idea of holding a comparison between the approved means and modern ones as their pride in Islam makes it inconceivable for them to hold a comparison between their religion and other ways. "A man-made way of life does not dare to rise to a status that allows it to be compared with Islam, even in a single aspect of its approaches."⁷⁷³ The argument that the IG pride in Islam makes it inconceivable for them to hold a comparison between their religion and other ways reflects how some of the IG arguments were emotional rather than rational, which is another feature of the IG approach at that stage.

⁷⁶⁹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 58.

⁷⁷⁰ Muḥammad Sayyid Kāmil, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya wa al-'Amal al-Ḥizbī: Iqā'āt Kāshifa," *the IG website*: http://www.egyig.com/Public/articles/recent_issues/11/05618333.shtml (Last accessed 14 June 2014).

⁷⁷¹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 59.

⁷⁷² Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 59.

⁷⁷³ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 60.

The above arguments are not only emotionally driven but also based on the assumption that Islam prohibits any thing coming from outside it and that any new tools or means that was not used before must be contradictory to Islam. That is why the leaders are reluctant to mere thinking of other ways or modern tools without considering that some of them might be in line with Islamic injunctions or at least not contradictory to them. A comparison does not mean showing the differences only but means showing differences, similarities and points when there is no contradiction. Thus, in the IG old approach, the dramatic differences between the past and present and the new challenges of life are completely discarded. Ironically, this might amount to the assumption of some detractors of Islam in their claim that Islam is rigid and does not adapt itself to the new requirements of life. This again branches from the IG full reluctance to consider new realities and full reliance on literal textual interpretations of the Sharia that led them to confining change to the old tools used by the Prophet and his companions, the era which is always described as the Golden Age and to which Jihadists in general and the IG in particular are extremely nostalgic.

Before Revisions: Jihad and Relationship with Non-Muslims

Jihad is the third variable in the IG approved means of change and is a master frame for all jihadist movements to justify violence in general, hence the name Jihadists. The term jihad here is broader than fighting local regimes and the refraining group. It means by way of priority fighting those in addition to fighting other original non-Muslims to spread Islam. This order is based on the IG dogma of the near enemy. Jihad is truly and rightly, the leaders argue, the 'neglected duty'.⁷⁷⁴ Jihad was viewed as inevitably dictated by several Sharia obligations. The reality, the leaders argue, is that Muslim lands are dominated by apostate rulers who enforce *jāhiliya* and replace the Sharia, that refraining groups who support those rulers suspend most of the rites of the Sharia, that there is no Muslim caliph, that Muslim lands are seized and that prisons everywhere are full of Muslim prisoners.⁷⁷⁵ Therefore, jihad is an inevitability dictated by the obligation of ousting the apostate rulers who replace the Sharia and enforce *jāhilī* laws on people, by the obligation of fighting the refraining group which stops practising any of the Islamic rituals, by the obligation of appointing a caliph for Muslims, by the obligation of

⁷⁷⁴ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 77.

⁷⁷⁵ This is an example of injustice (diagnostic) framing.

defending Muslim lands and restoring parts that were captured by disbelievers, and by the obligation of freeing Muslim prisoners.⁷⁷⁶

So, the IG plan of action was to first free Muslim lands by following a series of military operations that would start with ousting apostate rulers and subjugating refraining groups (the near enemy) and compelling them to commit to the Islamic rites and installing a Muslim caliph who will be able to restore the Islamic rule. From there, they would proceed to the far enemy to restore usurped Muslim lands and free Muslim prisoners. The last stage is to send Muslim armies throughout the globe to call people to Islam through preaching for those who want to listen and the sword to those who refuse to listen. The only way to achieve this goal is jihad in the cause of Allah, which makes jihad inevitable.⁷⁷⁷

There are many sincere Muslims, the IG criticises, who recognise the importance of jihad, but they do not practice jihad under the pretext that Muslims are weak and have no caliph or strong armies. So, they delay jihad claiming to be doing like Prophet Muhammad who delayed jihad when Muslims were weak and oppressed in Mecca. This is wrong, the leaders contend, as when the Prophet delayed jihad, there was a divine commandment to the Prophet to forgive and be patient at that stage. However, for current Muslim generations they are commanded with fighting not with tolerance and forgiveness as the Prophet did. The humiliating situation of Muslims nowadays is ascribed to the neglect of jihad; so any Muslim who neglects jihad nowadays is undoubtedly sinful.

Like Faḍl, the IG lifted the practical constraints on jihad and argued that if there is no ability to launch jihad, preparation becomes compulsory as this is the only way out for the Ummah. Like Faraj, the IG leaders argue that the stage of weakness that Muslims experienced in Mecca was abrogated along with all of its rulings and injunctions. Thus, the IG continued to implement its purely textual approach by counter-framing a practical reality with a text when the leaders noted that the state of weakness Muslims experience nowadays is not similar to that stage of early Muslims for those Muslims who were in the stage of weakness were not ordered to fight or to prepare for fighting. But for current Muslims, they are ordered to fight and prepare for fighting as per the Quran 8:61. So this stage should be called the stage of preparation rather

⁷⁷⁶ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 85-6. This reasoning is an example of prognostic and motivational framing.

⁷⁷⁷ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 86.

than the stage of weakness. Again, Ibn Taymiya is quoted here to support this line of argument.⁷⁷⁸

Moreover, the IG worldview and dogma of *barā'* amplified their conception of jihad and inevitability of confrontation. They argue that what further makes jihad inevitable is the nature of Islam and the nature of *jāhiliyya* which are always in conflict and can never coexist. According to the leaders, conflict between Islam and *jāhiliyya* will never stop to exist even if Muslims try to overlook or ignore it because their enemies will never become content until they drive Muslims away from their religion. This is the goal of each party. Islam tries to annihilate and uproot *kufṛ* and the disbelievers try to annihilate and uproot Islam. So, Muslims will be 'extremely stupid' if they, after that elucidation, overlook that fact and stop making jihad before uprooting all material powers that help disbelief and its laws. Therefore, fighting must not stop before all features and system of disbelief are uprooted and levelled to the ground. Muslims have to know that even if they try to live peacefully with disbelief, disbelievers will not let them alone and they will uproot them and thus Muslims will lose twice, once in this life and another on the Day of Judgment.⁷⁷⁹ This reflects a conspiracy theory approach in the IG conception of how non-Muslims conspire against Islam.

The IG leaders employed history to support their views regarding disbelievers. However, their employment of history in their pro-violence writings was meant only to prove historical injustices and violations against Muslims, to serve as injustice diagnostic framing that requires violent actions that will stop these injustices (prognostic framing). They never used historical comparisons to argue for change of circumstances or difference of times and places that would require different *ijtihād*, which further proves their static view of the religion and its texts.

They argued, e.g., that history would stand as a witness that the disbelievers tried to annihilate the Prophet and his followers though they did not fight them or cause them any material harm. Even when the Prophet immigrated to another city, they kept on fighting him. Several examples from history were given to support that view. Therefore, jihad is an historical inevitability as well. So the purpose behind jihad, Ibn Taymiya is quoted, is to dedicate the religion, all of it, to

⁷⁷⁸ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 86-7.

⁷⁷⁹ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 87-8.

God and to make the word of God the uppermost. “Though killing is an evil in itself, it is made permissible to prevent a greater evil which is the *fitna* of disbelief.”⁷⁸⁰

Jihad was so bridged, amplified and extended that it was portrayed as the only way for Muslims to continue to exist. The IG framed jihad as the answer to the greatest challenge to Muslims nowadays: ‘to be or not to be’. If Muslims choose ‘to be’, they have to commit themselves to jihad, if they chose the other way, “then the interior of the earth is better for them than its exterior.”⁷⁸¹ Though jihad is, generally speaking, a collective obligation except in a few cases, the IG sees that the cases when jihad is an individual obligation are present nowadays. Therefore, jihad is currently an obligation on all capable Muslims. As jihad is an individual obligation, preparation for it and whatever it requires is also an individual obligation.⁷⁸² Framing ‘jihad’ as an individual obligation makes individual or small-scale acts of violence dependent on individual conditions and motivations and not on socio-political or organisational contexts or outcomes. This makes acts of violence more difficult to predict or prevent, which confirms the IG’s emphasis on the textual-only approach and its indifference to contexts and outcomes.

Furthermore, as ‘jihad’ is very risky, the leaders connected it to strong motivational framings like martyrdom, saving Islam and Muslims, making the word of God superior, restoring the caliphate and Sharia, removing tyrants and repelling injustice. This shows that motivational frames are of special significance for jihadi groups, as they build increased confidence among recruits in their ability to confront the potentially deadly consequences of their involvement in violent activities and convince adherents to overcome significant barriers for high-risk activism.⁷⁸³

Before Revisions: *Jizya*, *Dhimma* and the Attitude towards local Non-Muslims

The IG framed in *jizya*, *dhimma* and rulings of the abode of Islam to justify their attitudes towards the Christians of Egypt and similar local non-Muslim groups. However, a few statements are given in the Charter about *jizya* and rulings of the abodes (*aḥkām al-diyār*). The leaders insist that everybody must be under the rule of Islam. If local non-Muslims do not want

⁷⁸⁰ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 88-90.

⁷⁸¹ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 91.

⁷⁸² Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-‘Amal al-Islāmī*, 91-2.

⁷⁸³ Bert Klandermans and Dirk Oegema, “Potentials, Networks, Motivations, and Barriers: Steps Towards Participation in Social Movements,” *American Sociological Review* (52, no. 4 [August 1987]), 520; Page et al, “Framing Narratives,” 162.

to believe, they have to pay the *jizya* and abide by Islamic rule and rulings of the abode of Islam. If they refuse to believe or to pay the *jizya* and accept the rule of Islam, then fighting and killing is the alternative. Few verses were quoted to support this view such as 9:29.⁷⁸⁴ Despite being too concise, these few words clearly reflect the IG attitude towards local non-Muslims and their view on the abode of Islam and abode of disbelief. However, they did not explain how the rule of Islam would be imposed on those non-Muslims while they acknowledge that Islam does not rule even over Muslims. Therefore, their first step in this regard was to oust the ruler and impose the rule of Islam including *jizya* on non-Muslims.

Thus, the IG saw that the Christians of Egypt as *dhimmīs* who revoked the covenant of *dhimma*. Hence the IG considered their blood and properties to be lawful for them as revoking the covenant of *dhimma* rendered those *dhimmīs* into combatant disbelievers. Moreover, Egyptian Christians were treated not only through the concept of revoked *dhimma* but also through the concept of *barāʾ*. This was practically reflected in the acts of violence practiced by the IG against the Christian minorities of Egypt, particularly in Upper Egypt where the IG was most active. *The Report of the Religious Status in Egypt* mentions that the IG would severely intervene violently against any Christian who had a dispute with a Muslim and that on 19 June 1992 in Asyut governorate the IG killed 17 Christians in avenge to the killing of one Muslim at the hands of a Christian in what was known as Dayrūt Massacre of 1992, an incident whose escalating implications transferred to the neighbouring governorate of al-Minya.⁷⁸⁵

Incidents of robbery of gold shops owned by Christians in Upper Egypt and the consequent incidents of killing and violence against Christians⁷⁸⁶ were all, practically speaking, meant to fund the IG activities and put the Egyptian regime in trouble by showing its inability to protect minorities and thus press the regime to respond to the IG demands. However, these incidents were theologically framed in and justified by the refusal of the Christians to pay the *jizya* and reluctance to accept the rulings of Islam, which means that their covenant of *dhimma* was revoked and they became violable. This too reflects discrepancy between theory and practice.

⁷⁸⁴ Al-Jamāʿa al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-ʿAmal al-Islāmī*, 83.

⁷⁸⁵ Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Istrātijīyya bi al-Ahrām, *Taqrīr al-Hāla al-Dīniyya fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Al-Ahrām Publications, 1996), 190.

⁷⁸⁶ More examples of violence against Christians include applying Islamic penal laws (*ḥudūd*) on some Christians in al-Minyā and hanging the bodies of those killed on electricity pillars as happened in Abu Qirqāṣ in al-Minyā between 1992 and 1994. Another example is attacking Mary Jirjis Church and killing 13 Christian inside the church. See ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ʿAlī, “Qānūn al-Irhāb Fashala fī Manʿ al-Irhāb Ṭuwāl Rubʿi Qarn,” *Al-Aḥālī Newspaper* (31 May 2006). See more details in Al-ʿAwwā, *Al-Jamāʿa al-Islāmiyya*, 135-8.

Furthermore, the IG ignored the fact that it is only the state, not individuals or groups, which is allowed to collect *jizya* and take proper action against those who refuse to abide by the covenant of *dhimma*. However, their conception of the regime as *Jāhilī* enabled them to override that condition and appoint themselves in charge of implementing the rulings of Islam.

Before Revisions: *Amān*, Tourism and the Attitude towards Foreign Non-Muslims

As part of the IG reactions to the Egyptian regime's violations, tourists were targeted by the IG, which was theologically justified by framing in the evils of tourism. Ṭal'at Fu'ād Qāṣim, author of *al-Risāla al-Līmāniyya*, argues that many tourist activities are forbidden and therefore tourism as a source of income for the state is forbidden. He added that tourism in its present form is an abomination and a means by which prostitution and AIDS are spread. Tourism was also considered as a source of all depravities and a means of collecting information on the Islamic movement. For all of these reasons, the IG considered tourism impermissible and therefore must be destroyed.

As tourism was not linked to *ḥākimiyya* and was forbidden only for the above reasons which are classified under the IG definition of *munkar*, targeting tourism should be technically classified under *ḥisba* and not under fighting the apostate regime. Given that fact, further discrepancy between the IG theory and action is reflected as nothing of the regulations and escalating steps of *ḥisba* was observed when the IG was striking against this important sector of the Egyptian economy. In addition, targeting tourism resulted in the death of some tourists, and forced *ḥisba* does not allow the *muḥtasib* to take the life of the offender. This discrepancy is further disclosed by Qāṣim's statement that "Striking at such an important source of income will be a major blow against the state. It does not cost us much to strike at this sector.... And it is one of our strategies for destroying the government."⁷⁸⁷

Thus even incidents of violence against Christians, targeting tourism and killing tourists were also meant to press and embarrass the regime to respond to the IG demands. Having been asked why would innocent tourists have to be killed? Qāṣim answered that they warned the tourists not to come to Egypt but they insisted to come and that the IG targets 'tourism not

⁷⁸⁷ Qāṣim in Mubarak, "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want," 43-4.

tourists'.⁷⁸⁸ The statement that they target 'tourism not tourists' is to rid the IG of the charge of killing innocents as they consider the tourists to have valid *amān* that makes them inviolable. However, the validity of the *amān* comes from what tourists understood as *amān* (i.e., the visa) though the visa is in fact not a valid *amān* as it was issued by an illegitimate apostate regime.⁷⁸⁹ In other words the visa itself was not recognised by the IG as a valid *amān* being issued by an illegitimate regime. However, as tourists understood it to be *amān*, their understanding bars them from being killed as whatever non-Muslims understand as valid *amān* is considered acceptable even if it was originally invalid. This reveals more discrepancy between theory and action.

Before Revisions: The Attitude towards Other Muslims

The IG framed in the concept of *muwālāh* to justify its attitudes towards other Muslim groups. The IG views that achieving their goals of enslaving people to their Lord and establishing Islamic Caliphate must be achieved through collective work in a group or community that works according to the commandments of the Sharia. Thus collective work in a group is the correct form of *muwālāh* and is the meaning of the Divine order to be united and undivided. Based on that, the IG leaders criticise calls for isolation from society and refuse them altogether.⁷⁹⁰

Though the IG is firmly calling for unity among Muslims, it practically excluded a large portion of Muslim movements from the aspired coalition under the pretext that their actions are not governed by the etiquettes of the Sharia. This came in the form of a condition that the IG leaders put for any group to qualify for joining the extended Muslim group: that is to be committed to the Islamic Sharia in its goals and objectives, in its creed and way of understanding, in its actions and endeavours. The leaders gave no clue on who would judge these aspects in other groups, nor did they determine which interpretation of the Sharia would be acceptable. The clear implication is that the IG leaders themselves would be the arbiters in this regard.

⁷⁸⁸ Qāsim in Mubarak, "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want," 44.

⁷⁸⁹ Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Muqrī', *Ḥukm Qatl al-Madaniyyin fī al-Sharī'a al-Islāmiyya* (London: Al-Markaz al-Dawlī li al-Dirāsāt wa al-I'lām, 1418 AH), 194-5.

⁷⁹⁰ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 93-8. Shukrī Muṣṭafā's 'Society of Muslims' was the most famous group that called for isolation from the Society, being *jāhilī*.

Furthermore, they did not take into consideration the inevitable variation among Islamic movements in their understanding and implementation of the commands of the Sharia and the differences in the way they work for Islam. Indeed, each group considers itself to be the true representative of Islam and the one closer to the way of the Prophet. As the IG leaders have explicitly stated that “many of these groups have freed themselves from the boundaries of the Sharia and have gone beyond the limits of its approved way of action,”⁷⁹¹ the leaders are thereby practically excluding the majority of Muslim movements and disqualifying them from joining the unified Muslim group that will work for the religion.

The leaders insist that unity is obligatory only if it going to be successful and not counterproductive, and it will not succeed except if the Muslim groups are united in their objectives, creed and understanding of the religion. Any differences in any of these categories constitute an obstacle to unity and any differences in other than these three categories are acceptable such as the differences in juristic issues. Examples of unacceptable differences include saying that music and singing are permissible and accepting figurative interpretation of God’s Attributes.⁷⁹²

However, these examples specifically are known to be subject to differences and debates among Sunni Muslim scholars and the issue of music is always classified among the juristic issues not those of creed, which confirms that the IG established itself as the arbiter of what kind of differences to be accepted and what to be rejected. Moreover, though the leaders state that they accept differences in juristic issues, they did not explain what kind of issues should be classified as juristic and what kind of issues should be classified as creedal. As will be explained later, this point, categorisation of the juristic and creedal issues, is in fact what made the IG dismissive of others before revisions and inclusive after revisions.

Thus, the leaders have explicitly stated that they do not accept those who disagree with them in their understanding, objectives, ways, loyalties or animosities. They do not accept those who want to follow a course of action that is not approved by Islam such as political action or parties. Thus, it is not surprising that the list of those who are declined the right to join the extended Muslim group is lengthy. This includes in addition to the nationalistic and secularists, any heretic

⁷⁹¹ Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-’Amal al-Islāmī*, 98.

⁷⁹² Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-’Amal al-Islāmī*, 134-5.

who has a view different from those of the Salaf in any issue of creed; they reject the Shiites, the Sufis, the Murji'ah.....or anyone who contradicts the way or understanding of the Salaf.⁷⁹³ Yet, rejecting these groups does not mean avoiding interacting and cooperating with them in secular matters of mutual interest as this is permissible even with non-Muslims, but the difference between cooperating and uniting with them must be clearly noted.⁷⁹⁴ Even here the practice deviated from theory as the IG totally renounced, for example, the MB even in matters where they would accept cooperation with other groups. They insisted that, "Our disagreements with the Brothers prevent cooperation."⁷⁹⁵

Conclusion

The above analysis of the IG and al-Jihād stances towards violence shows that they have exhibited behavioural manifestations consistent with most, or all, of the Salafi norms and are tied to Jihadists' religious practice: adhering to a highly legalistic interpretation of Islam; trusting only core Salafi Jihadist scholars; perceiving an irreconcilable schism between Islam and the West; having a low level of tolerance for perceived theological differences; and attempting to impose their religious beliefs on others. These five behavioural manifestations were used by Gartenstein-Ross in his PhD dissertation as measurable variables applicable to most Salafi norms to determine the religiosity of Jihadists and the importance of religious ideas as a causal factor that drive people towards violence.⁷⁹⁶ This confirms the premise of this study that religious ideas and ideology are of paramount importance.

The IG asserted that they wanted to establish the Islamic religion everywhere in the world and bring it to every human being, which could be realised only through making people fully submissive to God and by restoring the lost caliphate. This will not be achieved except if the

⁷⁹³ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 136.

⁷⁹⁴ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 138.

⁷⁹⁵ Qāsim in Mubarak, "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want," 41. The IG introduced itself from the beginning as a rival to the MB and disapproved of the MB's peaceful approach to change that does not promote confrontation with the regime. The IG criticised the MB's acceptance to work within the established institutions of the regime, particularly the parliament. They attacked the Brothers for accepting whatever rulers give to them even if they were tyrant apostate rulers. They also criticised the MB's attitudes from Mubarak's policies and their coalition with the Secular Wafd party. In addition, the condemned the MBs' lenient attitude towards the Copts and considered it to be a relationship that is based on the prohibited *muwālāh*. See Hāla Muṣṭafā, *Al-Islām al-Siyāsī fī Miṣr min Ḥarakat al-Islāh ilā Jamā'āt al-'Unf* (Cairo: Wikālat al-Ahrām li al-Tawzī', 1992), 176-7.

⁷⁹⁶ For an overview and evaluation of these variables and how they are reflective of Salafi religious norms, see Gartenstein-Ross, "Significance of Religion," 68-75.

government in power is also submissive to God so that Islam can become the true ruler over people. Thus, full establishment of the religion would be achieved only if an Islamic system is installed.⁷⁹⁷ This is why the IG believed in the 'inevitability of confrontation' with local governments to restore the Sharia; a belief that was mirrored in the title of the book that presented these views: *Inevitability of Confrontation*.⁷⁹⁸

In framing terms, the leaders employed 'frame articulation' by connecting and aligning events and experiences (injustices) and making them hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion. This was done under the rubric of religious moral directives such as *ḥākimiyy*, caliphate and Sharia rule. As with Faḍl, though theological issues and the experiences and realities linked to these issues as presented by the leaders are not new, they were assigned special novelty; not so much through the originality or newness of their ideational elements, but through the manner in which these events were spliced together and articulated, in a way that granted them a new angle of vision, a vantage point, and an interpretation through assembling, packaging and collating pieces of the observed, experienced, and recorded 'reality' and linking them to an appealing interpretation of the Islamic moral code. Thus, the leaders served as skilful and compelling recruiters who knew how to weave interpretations of history, religion and present injustice into a tactical imperative. Therefore, it is this "weaving, this blending, this knitting or stitching together of strands of history, religious beliefs or ideology, conceptions of injustice, and selected events by movement and other sponsoring organisations that is the essence of the processes of frame articulation and elaboration."⁷⁹⁹

In these and similar arguments, the IG looked only at texts and interpreted them in their own way, completely discarding other considerations and contexts. Real world events and contexts were used only to develop injustices to help frame the texts. This was because they looked at the whole scene only through the eyes of the creedal issue of *ḥākimiyya* whose violation would require fighting to implement the commandments of God, irrespective of the ensuing consequences or aftermaths.⁸⁰⁰

Though concepts like *ḥisba*, jihad and *jizya* are not new, the way the IG and al-Jihād framed and practised them did not tap into the majority of people's existing cultural values, beliefs and

⁷⁹⁷ Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya, *Mithāq al-'Amal al-Islāmī*, 46-7.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 34-5.

⁷⁹⁹ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 131.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 34.

ideas. As one of the main factors affecting frame resonance is the extent to which the frame taps into existing cultural values and beliefs, both groups have resorted to what framing literature calls 'frame amplification'. This involves the idealisation, clarification, invigoration or embellishment of existing values or beliefs (*hisba*, jihad, etc.). The process of frame amplification is common to most movements, especially those like the IG and al-Jihād, which have been stigmatised because their beliefs and/or values contradict the dominant culture's core values.⁸⁰¹

Amplifying and reframing these concepts depended on the production of written literature but also on the multiplication of religious cultural products such as mosque lessons, small pamphlets, and audio and video tapes, along with the emergence of numerous actors (leaders and ideologues) with claims to religious authority. All this has given orientation to identity frames that utilise religious idioms and overlap with those of the Islamists and common people seeking solutions for their social and economic problems. Interpretative frameworks produced by the leaders arrayed religious and cultural concepts and symbols that appeal to people's sentiments, emotions and needs. In this way, elements of their discourse could resonate well with segments of the population beyond immediate supporters and adherents.⁸⁰²

Despite being coated in religious discourse, the prognostic and motivational frames of the IG also provided an attractive image of an idealised Islamic state, capable of solving Egypt's numerous social, political and economic problems. Though led and inspired by leaders, these efforts are largely the result of an organisationally embedded process in which the articulation and amplification of strips of history, religious and personal injustices, selected segments of the Sharia texts, group-specific beliefs, and various contemporary events are woven together in a way that ultimately provides a compelling rationale for risky violent actions.⁸⁰³

Thus, this chapter discussed the IG pre-revisions ideology on the concepts that were used to justify violence, and explained how these concepts were framed, interpreted and acted upon by the IG. The chapter also showed that the IG pre-revision frames targeted three categories of people: local regime and its supporters, local and foreign non-Muslims as well as other Muslim groups. The IG views regarding these three groups were, generally speaking, characterised by

⁸⁰¹ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 624.

⁸⁰² Ismail, "Islamist Movements," 401.

⁸⁰³ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 132.

antagonism, exclusion and a tendency to clash, rather than conciliation and compromise. Common features of their pro-violence framing include: heavy reliance on texts only while discarding pragmatic considerations, indifference about the outcomes of their actions, highly legalistic, literal and sometimes emotional interpretations of religious texts, heavy reliance on classical Salafi literature, trusting only Salafi scholars, having a low tolerance for perceived theological differences; attempting to impose their religious views on others, perceiving an irreconcilable schism between Islam and the West, and summoning the fatwas of classical scholars and applying them to current realities without noting the differences between the old and new realities or contexts.

The IG literal and legalistic approach of interpretation and their indifference to outcomes was evident in its literal analysis of the verse of jihad, “Fight in the cause of God; you shall be asked only about yourself.” [Qur’an 4:84]. According to the pre-revision view, the verse means that a Muslim is not responsible for the results and consequences of jihad; he is responsible only for himself. This means that a Muslim is commanded to fight even if he does not possess tools of achieving victory and whether or not other Muslims are helping him in this regard.⁸⁰⁴ Thus, the views of the IG in this regard were presented mainly as a theological vision that relied extensively on classical Salafi interpretations which the IG accepted without questioning. As a Salafi group, the IG looked at the classical scholars as the ‘Salaf’ whose footsteps are to be followed and whose views must be irrevocably accepted as the only valid interpretation of the sacred religious texts. However, differences of time, place and context were not observed.

The IG rigid worldview, influenced by dominant injustices, an unpleasant reality and a new world order, employed the context and the new world order- that is full of injustices- to justify violence while overlooking these realities and contexts as challenges and obstacles in their evaluation of the power of their opponents and the consequences of the application of their prognostic frames. Thus, they only looked at reality through the eyes of texts and paid minimal attention to practical considerations, pragmatism and outcomes. Thus, the status quo was employed only as injustice frames to support the IG understanding of texts but was ignored in determining the fruitfulness of the adopted means of change and their likely consequences. The IG wanted everything and every single Islamic law to be applied and was willing to fight a strong state that applied even most of the Islamic injunctions but did not apply one or more of its

⁸⁰⁴ Usāma Ḥāfīz, interview in al-‘Awwā, *Al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya*, 190; Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 43-4.

rulings. They failed mainly because they insisted on violence without practical assessment of the consequences as they thought that violence would be a quick means of achieving their goals.

Moreover, the acts of violence perpetrated by the IG swerved from theory as the members were drowning in retaliatory confrontations with the regime, which made most of their actions deviate from the details of the theoretical grounds the leaders had laid out for them. The discrepancy between action and theory was further fuelled by the lack of communication between the leaders and the grassroots due to the strict prison conditions imposed on the leaders, which marked the lack of any leadership to guide the members' actions and ensure its compliance with the theory. The subsequent internal divergences on the appropriate use of violence between leaders and followers intensified micro-level dynamics of violence when the leaders lost the remaining executive and organisational control.⁸⁰⁵

However, the greatest reason for the discrepancy between theory and practice, particularly when it comes to *hisba*, is the fact that the IG is a majority lay organisation whose members lack the necessary qualifications and religious training required to professionally understand and implement the theoretical literature. In the absence of guiding leadership, the lack of proper religious training caused adherents to misunderstand and misapply the theoretical details laid out in their literature.

Thus, instead of fighting to oust the ruler and implement the Sharia, they were only concerned with fighting to restore their lost rights and free their members without being governed by the regulations that were recorded in their literature. They even declared that they intended to strike against industry and agriculture. When they were asked about the time and extent of targeting agriculture and industry, their answer was, "It depends on the government's hostility towards us."⁸⁰⁶ However, though action on the ground deviated from theory, the theoretical literature was very important because the general ideas of *takfir*, rebellion, refraining groups and *hisba* in the literature represented the general justification through which any act of violence would be framed and justified even though the individual details and regulations of each of these concepts were not observed.

⁸⁰⁵ Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 299.

⁸⁰⁶ Qāsim in Mubarak, "What Does the Gama'a Islamiyya Want," 44.

The huge difference in power, weaponry and techniques between the regime and the IG helped the regime crush the IG fighters and put the majority of them in prison. The military defeat was coupled with spiritual defeat. In addition to counter-framing by official scholars and the campaigns of the media against them, the excessive use of forced *hisba* and the bloodshed that resulted from confrontations between the state and the IG, alienated people from the IG members and made them lose people's sympathy. Thus, on the practical level they departed from their principles and could not build a strong base of public support and, on the theoretical level, they failed to act properly upon their doctrines and were concerned with 'why to fight' instead of 'how to fight'.

Chapter Six: The IG Views after Revisions

Introductory remarks

This chapter has two objectives: the first is to provide a detailed discussion of the IG attitudes concerning issues related to violence after revisions with the aim of exploring the main features of that stage and explaining how the IG leaders framed their new thought. To do so, the issues that affect the rulers and their regimes will be discussed first. These include: *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr*, rebellion, inevitability of confrontation, the refraining group, fatwas of Ibn Taymiya on the Tartars, abode of Islam and abode of disbelief, jihad, extremism, and *al-walā' wa al-barā'*. Thereafter, the chapter will discuss the issues and attitudes in the IG dogma that directly influence Muslim and non-Muslim masses, other Muslim movements and foreigners. These include: *ḥisba*, democracy and participation in political life, attitudes towards 'the other' – both Muslims and non-Muslims, – *dhimmīs* and *jizya*.

The second objective of the chapter is to answer the main question of how the IG could shift from violence to nonviolence based on Islamic theological interpretations in both cases. In addition to providing the reader with a summarised discussion of the ideas and arguments in the new views, the overviews are also intended to argue and prove that the IG leaders extensively framed in the *Uṣūlī* concepts of harm and benefit, Sharia general objectives, circumstantial justifications and interpretations to arrive at the new conclusions. The final analysis will build on this to show how these concepts were theologically employed to move from pro to anti-violence stances based on Sharia theological reasoning in both situations.

As the writings of the IG after revisions are very extensive, it would be beneficial to remind the readers of the main sources written by the IG leaders and then explore the general features of the new literature before discussing the IG opinions on various issues.

The IG leaders published several books about their new attitudes. The first series of books, called *Taṣḥīḥ al-Mafāhīm* (Correcting the Concepts), was issued in 2002 and included four books: *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf: Ru'ya Wāqī'iyya wa Naẓra Shar'iyya* (Non-Violence Initiative: A Sharia Perspective and a Realistic Vision), *Taslīṭ al-Aḍwā' 'alā mā Waqa' fī al-Jihād min Akhṭā'* (Light Shedding on the Mistakes Committed during Jihad), *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww fī al-Dīn wa Takfīr al-Muslimīn* (Impermissibility of Excessiveness in Religion and Accusing Muslims of

Disbelief), and *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn fī Taṣḥīḥ Mafāhīm al-Muḥtasibīn* (Advice and Clarification on Correcting the Concepts of those who Perform *Ḥisba*).

The first book explains the practical and theological reasons for the Non-Violence Initiative, while the second book illustrates the IG's new understanding of the concept of jihad and sheds light on the mistakes the IG and other jihadist groups made in the name of jihad. The third book criticises extremism and excessiveness in religious matters and argues against the excessive *takfīrī* creed of Jihadists, while the fourth book deals with *ḥisba* and how it should be regulated. These four books generally cover and address most of the issues that were previously used to justify violence and they carry the names of the eight IG historical leaders. This was followed by a book in which the leaders recorded the memoirs of their life in prison and their revisions. They called it *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt* (River of Memories).

Several books were published afterwards between 2004 and 2008, and each dealt specifically with one or more issues related to jihadi thought and relevant concepts. Most of these later books were written by the IG main ideologue, Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, and were reviewed by other leaders. The most important of these is the book devoted to *ḥākimiyya* and titled, *Al-Ḥākimiyya: Naẓra Sharʿiyya wa Ruʾya Wāqīʿiyy* (*Ḥākimiyya: A Sharia Perspective and Realistic Vision*). Also included is a book on the fatwas of Ibn Taymiya and how they were interpreted to justify violence. This book is titled, *Fatwā al-Tatār li Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiya: Dirāsa wa Taḥlīl* (The Fatwa on the Tartars by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiya: A Study and Analysis). Another book titled, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha wa Fiqh al-Natāʾij* (Inevitability of Confrontation and *Fiqh* of Outcomes), responded to the previous ideology of the IG on the inevitability of confrontation.

Another category of books is devoted to a critique of al-Qaeda and commenting on its violent actions, such as, the bombing of Riyadh and Casablanca. These included books like *Istrātijiyyat wa Taffjīrāt al-Qāʾida* (The Strategy and Bombings of al-Qaeda) and *Taffjīrāt al-Riyāḍ: Al-Aḥkām wa al-Āthār* (The Bombings of Riyadh: Rulings and Consequences). Another category of books was devoted to societal issues and *daʿwa*. These include: *Daʿwa li al-Taṣāluḥ maʿa al-Mujtama* (A Call for Reconciliation with the Society), *Hidāyat al-Khalāʾiq bayna al-Gḥāyāt wa al-Wasāʾi* (Guiding People between Ends and Means), *Naẓarāt fī Ḥaqāiqat al-Istiʿlāʾ bi al-Īmān* (Perspectives on Taking Pride in the Faith) and *Tajdīd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī* (Renewing Religious Discourse).

Generally speaking, the main ideas and arguments related to violence in the later books issued after 2002, are repetition or expansion on what was included in earlier books issued in 2002. The last category of books does not deal directly with issues related to violence. Therefore, in the overview of the new thought below, only the most relevant and earliest books would be used in referencing, as repeated and irrelevant material would be excluded. Later books, interviews and newspaper articles would all be used when they mention a relevant point that is not mentioned in the earlier books. Moreover, as these books were written by some of the historical leaders and reviewed, edited and approved by the rest of the leaders, the views in these books are considered to belong to all the leaders and therefore the reference will be to 'the leaders' or the 'IG' in general, and not to a specific leader.

Regarding the general features of the new literature, the leaders have stated from the outset that they follow the way of Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a and al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ (the righteous predecessors) as the general framework from which they derive their proofs and arguments and arrive at conclusions. This is their basis of judging any view or argument and ascertaining whether it is acceptable or not. However, the leaders did not directly mention details about the features of the way of the Salaf or Ahl al-Sunna or what distinguishes it from others. By stating that their approach is based on the way of Ahl al-Sunna and the Salaf, the IG leaders are requesting their readers to measure the validity of their writings by their commitment to the approach of the Salaf as indicated by the evidence and proofs presented. Stating so could also be a message from the IG that their approach – that depends on the way and writings of Ahl al-Sunna – is what prompted them to depend exclusively on the sources approved by that way, and that excluding other Islamic sects or groups is not because of any animosity towards them but because the writings of these sects or groups contradict the approach of Ahl al-Sunna upon which the IG writings rely.⁸⁰⁷

Stating that they based their arguments and conclusions on the approach of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'a confirms the leaders' commitment to the Sunni stream of thought as opposed to that of the Shia or any other Muslim sect that they consider deviant. However, this cannot be taken as evidence on the existence of a detailed specific methodology in the leaders' writings, especially because they did not mention any details about the features and limits of that approach in their works. Therefore, all the theological arguments of the leaders are derived

⁸⁰⁷ Rashwān, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 285.

from the variant Sunni sources as opposed to those of the Shia. These included old sources of classical Muslim scholars, such as Ibn Taymiya, Ibn al-Qayyim and al-'Izz b. 'Abd al-Salām, as well as sources of contemporary Muslim scholars such as, al-Qaradāwī, al-Ghazālī and al-Būṭī. Nonetheless, the old sources outweigh the contemporary ones in the number that are used and quoted. This differs from the pre-revision stage where old sources were the only ones used in matters of the Sharia. In the new literature, the writings of many contemporary scholars are used even though they were considered deviant before revisions were made.

Another general feature of the IG writings after revisions is the supremacy of the proofs from the Sharia over all other forms of proofs in explaining and exploring ideas and arguments. Any issue would be supported with evidence from the Quran and the Sunnah, and the leaders would also mention other related sources that explain the texts of the Quran and the Sunnah or build upon their explanations. References of numbers of verses from the Quran and the source in which a specific hadith is mentioned are given in most cases.⁸⁰⁸ However, selectivity in presenting and analysing the material which serves the leaders' views is quite clear in the new literature as it was in the old literature. The leaders would select the sources and material which would serve their point of view, while ignoring others. This is clear in selecting specific Sharia sources and points of view, especially when speaking about rebellion, *ḥisba*, *takfīr* and the relationship with non-Muslims.

It also seems that the leaders tried, or were told, not to speak about the role of the government in the revisions though the revisions could not have been written, the leaders would not have been allowed to tour prisons to explain the new thoughts to the grassroots, and the books would not have been revised by al-Azhar and printed and distributed widely without the permission and support of the regime.⁸⁰⁹ The same applies to the critique of the regime or the government. The general line of thought tries to evade speaking about the faults and injustices of the regime.

Another common feature of the literature is repetitiveness and excessive details. In their attempt to devote a book to every single issue related to violence and commenting on the new events as they occur, the leaders wrote over 20 books and had tens of interviews and hundreds of newspaper articles. In all of these writings they repeat the same arguments and rules,

⁸⁰⁸ Rashwān, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 296.

⁸⁰⁹ Details of this was mentioned in chapter 2.

especially when speaking about the rules of Principles of Jurisprudence and matters related to harm and benefit as well as those related to the reality. This is sometimes necessary due to the overlapping of the concepts, and at other times it could be intended to confirm the same ideas and prevent any misinterpretation by repeating them on several occasions and in different contexts. Examples of these include, repeating the same arguments on *takfir* in several places,⁸¹⁰ providing excessive details about the historical accounts of the consequences of rebellion against rulers,⁸¹¹ and speaking repetitively about the reasons for revisions and the enemies of the IG, Egypt and the religion.⁸¹²

Another common feature is the employment of history as evidence to prove the new views. Examples include, providing a historical chronology of *takfir* in Egypt, a historical account of reconciliation among Muslims,⁸¹³ and historical examples of rebellion against Muslim rulers throughout Muslim history.⁸¹⁴ While narrating these historical accounts, the leaders have acknowledged their mistakes in not properly taking lessons and examples from history in their previous thought, justifying this with their preoccupation with daily actions and confrontations with the regime, which deprived them of the peace of mind required for such contemplation.

Another given reason for the leaders' neglect of history in their previous writings is the lack of cooperation and coordination with other Muslim movements, which could have made the IG consider history more efficiently.⁸¹⁵ However, though the leaders have argued that history, in general, Muslim and non-Muslim, is a store for lessons and learning, they hardly used examples from non-Islamic history, perhaps because they were speaking about Islamic issues that require support from Islamic history. Similar to this is the consideration of domestic, regional and international circumstances and the conditions of the country and Muslims in the new world order when issuing judgments or arriving at Sharia rulings. The consideration of these aspects is a completely new feature in the IG writings.

Another methodological feature is the leaders' adoption of the language of dialogue, softness and leniency of discourse in their discussions and debates with others. The new literature generally adopts rationality and leniency in calling others, such as other jihadi movements, to

⁸¹⁰ See, e.g., Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 78; Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 10 ff.

⁸¹¹ See, e.g., Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 104-16.

⁸¹² See Ḥāfiẓ, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww fī al-Dīn*, 61; Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 61; Rashwān, *Dalīl al-Ḥarakāt*, 287.

⁸¹³ Ḥāfiẓ, *Al-Nuṣṣ wa al-Tabayīn*, 161-2.

⁸¹⁴ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 103-17.

⁸¹⁵ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 118-20.

change their stances or attitudes or to reconsider them in light of the new reality in and outside Egypt. This represents severance with the previous approach of rigidity and animosity towards others. Therefore, the leaders always declare their condemnation of rebuking, assaulting or accusing others of *kufṛ*. Examples include, the Sharia justifications for revisions,⁸¹⁶ employment of the Jurisprudence of harm and benefits⁸¹⁷ and the prohibition of issuing *takfīr* against government employees.⁸¹⁸ Adoption of dialogue, leniency and rational arguments with opponents is a confirmation of the new peaceful and accommodating stances of the IG.

Views of the IG after Revisions

As stated before, the IG leaders declared their non-violence initiative in 1997, started to tour prisons to discuss the initiative and convince the grassroots in 1999 and started publishing their literature in 2002. As this literature was meant to criticise and correct the previous thought as well as the interpretations and practices that resulted in catastrophic consequences for the IG and the community at large, the leaders stated from the outset that there is no harm in changing and revising some of the previous views regarding jihad or any other Sharia matter that was decided based on *ijtihād*. By this the IG is emphasising from the outset that revising their thoughts is acceptable and is supported by several proofs from the Sharia and examples from several Muslim scholars and Jurists. So there is no blame on the IG or any other Islamist movement if they wanted to revise some or all of their previous thoughts as long as they are returning to the truth and their new changes are supported with evidence from the Sharia.⁸¹⁹

The leaders also responded to the claim that reconciliation means letting down the religion. “This is untrue,” the leaders emphasise, “because reconciliation is supported by the texts of the Sharia and is good for all parties even though it would involve some injustices.”⁸²⁰ Thus the leaders established the necessity and acceptability of their revisions before introducing their new thought.

As this section discusses the IG attitudes towards issues related to violence after revisions, it will start with the most important issues that affect rulers and their regimes. These include

⁸¹⁶ Ḥāfīz, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 18 ff.

⁸¹⁷ Ḥāfīz, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 26-7.

⁸¹⁸ Ḥāfīz, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 169.

⁸¹⁹ Ḥāfīz, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 25-40.

⁸²⁰ Ḥāfīz, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 132-6.

ḥākimiyya, *takfīr*, rebellion, inevitability of confrontation, the refraining group, fatwas of Ibn Taymiya on the Tartars, abode of Islam and abode of disbelief, jihad, extremism, and *al-wal ā'wa al-barā'*. Then the issues and attitudes that directly influence the Muslim and non-Muslim masses, other Muslim movements and foreigners in the IG dogma will be discussed. These include *ḥisba*, democracy and participation in political life, the attitudes towards 'the other' Muslims and non-Muslims, *dhimmīs*, and *jizya*.

After Revisions: *Ḥākimiyya*, *Takfīr* and Rebellion

The leaders have, in the new thought, introduced new argument on *ḥākimiyya* which managed them to solve the issue of not applying the Sharia. This helped them solve the dilemma of having to fight as *ḥākimiyya* constituted the basic foundation and main justification to acts of violence against the state. Changing the interpretation of the verses on *ḥākimiyya* and accepting the view of some other Muslim scholars⁸²¹ who opined that refraining from applying the Sharia does not render people disbelievers unless they mock the Sharia or say that God's laws are inappropriate or inferior to other laws (*Jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl*). To support this interpretation, they framed in the *Uṣūlī* concepts of harm and benefits and contextual circumstances, arguing that contemporary rulers are excused if they do not apply the Sharia because of global or national conditions, which, if neglected, may cause harm that is greater than the benefits of implementing the Sharia.⁸²² Accepting local and international contexts and circumstances as irresistible factors that may oblige rulers to not implement of some Sharia rulings is a new approach in which the IG takes the circumstantial contexts into consideration before applying the textual rulings of the Sharia to any issue, an approach which the IG completely discarded before when it relied only on textual arguments.⁸²³

In addition to the discussions of *ḥākimiyya* in many of their books, the IG devoted an independent book to *ḥākimiyya* titled: *Al-Ḥākimiyya: Naẓra Shar'iyya wa Ru'ya Wāq'iyy* (*Ḥākimiyya: A Sharia Perspective and Realistic Vison*).⁸²⁴ The title of the book shows how *ḥākimiyya* was reframed to reflect considerations of reality and practical circumstances. The main theme which the book presents and defends is that the verses of *ḥākimiyya* mean that

⁸²¹ The different views on verses of *ḥākimiyya* were explained in chapter 3.

⁸²² Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān, interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 108.

⁸²³ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 35.

⁸²⁴ Full referencing of this book was given earlier in chapter 2.

rulers cannot be considered apostate unless they exhibit rejection or mocking of a Sharia ruling, or prefer another over it, which current rulers do not do. Therefore, making *takfīr* or launching rebellion against the contemporary regimes based on *ḥākimiyya* is prohibited. According to the new view presented in that book, Divine *ḥākimiyya* still belongs exclusively to God.⁸²⁵

However, by attending to the common Muslim conception of the flexibility of Sharia and its suitability for all times and places and the *Uṣūlī* rules of changing fatwas based on changing of human needs, times and places, the book argued that God has granted humans a form of *ḥākimiyya* to help them manage their changing daily affairs. As God knows that the Sharia is to be applied in this world and amongst humans and at different times, places and circumstances that make events vary and change all the time; God has granted humans the right to make legislations and judge between people within the general objectives of the Sharia. This is in order for people to cope with new incidents in their life regarding which there is no decisive text in the Sharia. This human *ḥākimiyya* must work within and be guided by that of God. So human *ḥākimiyya* and human legislations are not rejected in Islam but what is rejected of them is what contradicts the decisive legislations of God.

God has restricted this human *ḥākimiyya* with criteria and conditions and granted it only to qualified scholars, rulers and intellectuals of the Ummah. The main condition for the *ḥākimiyya* of humans is that it must stick to the tenets and principles of Islam without revoking any of its principles or general objectives. By stating that human *ḥākimiyya* works within that of God and that it is in fact an implementation of Divine *ḥākimiyya*, the IG bridged human *ḥākimiyya* with that of God. He further amplified his frame by arguing that the absence of human *ḥākimiyya* makes the Sharia paralyzed and unable to cope with the movement of life and the newly arising events and incidents. It would also give a change to extremist secularists and enemies of Islam to attack Islam and depict it with backwardness and the inability to adapt to life needs and fluctuations. Therefore, the IG bridged and amplified the new frame of human *ḥākimiyya* by saying that it is secret behind the continuity of the Sharia and its ability to exist at all times and places as it allows humans to device new rulings and prescriptions that suit the new occurrences and make the Sharia flexible to the new arising needs of humans.

The frame of human *ḥākimiyya* was further extended by stating a number of functions that it serves to help people. It allows qualified people to use indecisive texts of the Sharia that are

⁸²⁵ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 36.

prone to different interpretations to legislate whatever is more convenient for people at a particular place and time. It also allows humans to weigh different Juristic opinions and chose whichever is more convenient for their environment and more fulfilling of their interests. Even weak opinions, in terms of their textual evidence, can be chosen at the expense of the stronger ones if the weak opinions would achieve more benefits and minimise harm. Human *ḥākimiyya* also allows people to draft rulings of the Sharia in the form of laws to be used in courts and judiciary (codification of the Sharia). It also allows humans to decide on the application of the Sharia rulings to their daily lives and determine the suitability of applying the textual Sharia ruling to the practical cases of life. So, human *ḥākimiyya* complements that of God, but if it tries to challenge the divine orders and render halal the things which God made haram or haram the things which God made halal, such as allowing adultery or homosexuality or prohibiting polygamy, then human *ḥākimiyya* is rejected.⁸²⁶

Despite the very detailed discussion and analysis of the concept of human *ḥākimiyya*, all of these arguments are in fact of no real credit to the issue of *ḥākimiyya* as the examples and explanations given by the author are features of what is known as *ijtihād*. So the author changed the term *ijtihād* into human *ḥākimiyya* and mentioned the subcategories of *ijtiḥād* as features or subcategories of *ḥākimiyya*. Also the fact that human *ḥākimiyya* must work within Divine *ḥākimiyya* makes the whole concept irrelevant to the jihadi understanding of *ḥākimiyya* as the *takfīr* of rulers was not because of mere issuing of legislations but because of making legislations conflicting with those of God.

Theologically and technically speaking, the IG managed to change its position on *ḥākimiyya* by extending the condition of *Jaḥd* and *Istiḥlāl* it applied to the supporters of the regime and the refraining group to the ruler himself. As they did not previously provide a justification on why the ruler was the only one who is not entitled for this exemption from apostasy if he did not deny or mock the Sharia, they now apply the rule equally to everyone including the ruler. Not including the ruler in the condition of *jaḥd* and *Istiḥlāl* was a gap in the IG's old theory of *takfīr*, and through this gap the IG managed to revoke the old stance regarding the ruler by extending the condition of *jaḥd* and *Istiḥlāl* to the ruler as well.

In addition, they have introduced new contextual justifications that could excuse the ruler for not applying the Sharia in some cases. They have stated that the interests of Muslim countries

⁸²⁶ Ibrāhīm, *Al-Ḥākimiyya*, 45-7.

and the benefit of Islam should be taken as the deciding factor in handling matters of international relations. This entails that that a ruler is justifiable if he pursues the benefit of his own country while interacting with other international actors even if he had to neglect some Sharia rulings under necessity. Moreover, to completely block any venue for rebellion, the leaders framed in the *Uṣūlī* concept of harm and benefit, by arguing that even if the ruler has apostatised, rebellion is not permissible if its harm is greater than the benefits of ousting that apostate ruler.⁸²⁷

Thus, in their revisions the IG leaders were so lenient with rulers that they not only declared that they are not apostate but also excused them in some cases and argued that rebellion is completely prohibited even if rulers were to be considered apostate. They even emphasised that *ḥākimiyya* has been misused to cast charges of *kufr* on every Muslim leader, without considering their pros and cons, under the pretext that they are not applying the Sharia in full. *Ḥākimiyya*, the IG confirms, means that “the ultimate reference in governance should be God and the Prophet, but not that every rule or judgement must be found in these sources...While the ruler must not govern in a way that contradicts the sharia, the Qur’an and the Sunna do not address every single issue that a leader might confront.” The IG also moved the focus of blame in *ḥākimiyya* away from rulers by arguing that *ḥākimiyya* applies to everyone, not only to rulers, and therefore requires all people to act in accordance with the Sharia, as all people are equal before the Divine law. Therefore, people should not be stricter on rulers just because they are rulers; everybody commits sins, but this does not render them disbelievers.⁸²⁸

By emphasising that rulers should not be treated differently when it comes to *ḥākimiyya*, the IG is now promoting a sense of equality that is not meant, as it was in the past, to bring the oppressed up to the level of the elites, but rather to protect those elites from rebellion and undue criticism.⁸²⁹ The fact that the revisions, as a form of compromise, serve to preserve the autocratic regimes is neither new nor surprising, given that the literature of the early democratic transitions acknowledged that compromises often preserve many elements of existing power configurations.⁸³⁰ Furthermore, speaking about some sort of human *ḥākimiyya* is

⁸²⁷ See Ibrāhīm, *Al-Ḥākimiyya*; Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 36.

⁸²⁸ Ibrāhīm, *Al-Ḥākimiyya*, 110-14.

⁸²⁹ Stein, “Egypt’s Jama’a Islamiyya,” 874.

⁸³⁰ Schwedler, “Can Islamists Become Moderates,” 372.

a departure from the former purely textual stance that all matters of governance and judgement belong only and exclusively to God.

The new argument produced by IG about *ḥākimiyya* means, in textual theological terms, that the Egyptian regime is not apostate and thus, there is no religious ground to fight it or replace it with an Islamic regime. It also indirectly recognises the legitimacy of the state by conceding governance to it, and it acknowledges that the state is well-equipped to defend Islam, implement the Sharia and protect the interests of Muslims and non-Muslims. This affected all the objectives of the Organisation which were amended to include compliance with the state, nonviolent assistance to the state, and nonviolent opposition to laws and positions that clash with Islam.⁸³¹

However, the leaders did not suffice with the textual arguments; they also framed in the concepts of harm and benefit and pragmatic considerations to argue that the harm caused by rebellion against rulers, even if they have apostatised, far exceeds the benefits accrued from that rebellion. Thus, it is pragmatically erroneous and theologically prohibited to rebel against rulers. The most significant of the listed practical considerations that make rebellion erroneous are: when rebellion does not secure the benefits for which it was permitted, when it opposes the objective of guiding people, when the ability to launch successful rebellion is lacking, when it leads to demise of the fighters, and when the harm of rebellion is greater than its benefits'.⁸³²

The pragmatic factors that ban rebellion against apostate rulers, as presented by the IG, are the same as those introduced by Faḍl. However, the difference between Faḍl and the IG leaders in this regard is that the former banned rebellion only because of these practical constraints, not because the ruler is not apostate or because the application of some human laws does not constitute *kufr*; while the IG emphasised that the ruler is not apostate in principle, and even if he were to be considered apostate, rebellion would be prohibited because of these pragmatic considerations.

So the IG used both ways of reasoning: they argued, using Sharia proofs, that the regime is not apostate based on new interpretation of *ḥākimiyya* and therefore rebellion is prohibited; and for those who do not believe in the Sharia evidences presented by the IG, the practical

⁸³¹ Hamzawy and Grebowski, "From Violence to Moderation," 9-10.

⁸³² These are the titles of the sections. For the details, see Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 58-92; Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 103-20; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 36.

considerations make rebellion pragmatically mistaken and catastrophic. The change in attitudes towards *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and rebellion entailed a similar change in the concepts that branch from or relate to these issues such as the refraining group, fatwas of Ibn Taymiya and inevitability of confrontation.

After Revisions: Inevitability of Confrontation, the Refraining Group, Fatwas of Ibn Taymiya and Abodes of Islam

These issues branch from *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* as confrontation was considered 'inevitable' in order to fight the apostate rulers and the refraining groups and implement the Sharia. Muslim countries were considered abodes of disbelief because they were not governed by the Sharia, and the fatwas of Ibn Taymiya were the tools through which these rulings were assigned to rulers and Muslim countries. The revisions criticised 'inevitability of confrontation' and argued that 'defending a just cause does not make confrontation inevitable',⁸³³ for only God can declare something as inevitable.⁸³⁴ Regarding the 'refraining group', the IG have changed the argument and stated that none but the appointed government of a state can fight those who abstain from implementing compulsory rulings of the Sharia. Therefore, individuals or groups are not allowed to fight the state itself.⁸³⁵

As the IG reversed that order before when it placed itself in place of the state and considered the state as a group, the IG has now corrected the order and returned to the classical interpretation of the concept. They framed the new stance using the *Uṣūlī* concept that 'sovereign and governmental matters are to be handled only by the state'. This was also framed in the principle of harm and benefit as 'giving individuals or groups the right to intervene with sovereign matters results in harm, anarchy and seditions'. Therefore, soldiers and police officers are not considered refraining groups as they "implement the orders of the ruler who is excused in not applying some of the rulings of the Sharia because of the pressures of international conditions and circumstances."⁸³⁶

Also, The Fatwas of Ibn Taymiya were reframed using the *Uṣūlī* concept of 'change of fatwas with the change of times, places and circumstances'. Therefore, fatwas of Ibn Taymiya regarding

⁸³³ Ibrāhīm, *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājaha*, 41.

⁸³⁴ Ibrāhīm, *Hidāyat al-Khalā'iq*, 209.

⁸³⁵ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 37.

⁸³⁶ Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Raḥmān, interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 133.

the Tartars were considered valid only at his time. Thus, they do not apply to contemporary rulers as these fatwas were meant for a specific time and context, and applying them to contemporary regimes was considered a fatal mistake because there are huge differences between the Tartars and contemporary regimes, and thus drawing analogy between contemporary regimes and the Tartars is erroneous.⁸³⁷

In their new argument on ‘abodes of Islam and abodes of disbelief’, the IG leaders hold that Muslim lands nowadays are abodes of Islam and not abodes of disbelief. As with other concepts, the arguments in this regard relied upon circumstantial justifications as well as Juristic and *Uṣūlī* rules to arrive at this conclusion. The leaders argue that if the *takfīr* of individuals is extremely dangerous, the *takfīr* of the country as a whole is much more dangerous as it completely destroys the religion and abolishes Muslim countries and their sacrifices as well as the heritage of over fourteen centuries of Islam. As Islam certainly existed and persisted in Muslim countries with its rulings, practices, rites and manners throughout centuries, it is not fair to ignore all of the virtues in these centuries because of an emergency or a limited breach of the rulings or application of the Sharia. This too was based on the *Uṣūlī* rule that ‘certainty cannot be revoked except with a similar certainty’. Therefore, the leaders argue that “as Muslim countries have been described as abodes of Islam with certainty, such a description cannot be withheld except with similar certainty.”⁸³⁸

The *Uṣūlī* rule which states, ‘if some of the causes behind the issuance of a specific ruling continue to exist, the whole ruling remains in force’ was also employed to support this line of argument. So, the leaders argue that even if some of the Islamic rulings are no longer applied, other rulings are, and the manifestations of Islam is everywhere as ‘rulings of Islam’ are not restricted to laws and legislations but also extend to the issues of creed, manners, transactions and acts of worships which all exist in Muslim communities nowadays. The leaders add that the above is confirmed in most of the constitutions of Muslim countries, such as the Egyptian constitution, which state that Islam is the religion of the state and the principles of the Sharia are the main source of legislation.

⁸³⁷ This is because Ibn Taymiya based his fatwa on many factors which rendered the Tartars apostate. These factors do not apply to contemporary regimes. For a full analysis of the fatwa and a critique of the old approach of applying classical fatwas to contemporary regimes, see Ibrāhīm, *Fatwā al-Tatār*, 67 ff.

⁸³⁸ Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya bayna al-Mubādara wa al-Murāja’a,” in Ḍiyā’ Rashwān, ed., *Al-Murāj’āt min al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya ilā al-Jihād* (Cairo: Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Istirāṭiyya, Mu’assasat al-Ahrām, 2008), 50. Henceforth, Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya.”

Thereupon, though it is true that the Sharia is not fully applied in Muslim countries, the lack of part of the Sharia does not mean the lack of the whole. Therefore, it is not fair or correct, the IG argues, to deny the existence of Islam in a Muslim country because some of the rulings, such as corporal punishments (*ḥudūd*), are not applied. This is because the rulings of Islam are not confined to these rulings. They have also employed the *Uṣūlī* tool of counter implicature (*mafhūm al-Mukhālaḥa*) when they argued that as the Juristic rule states that “the existence of some of the rites of Islam in a society with a majority of non-Islamic rites does not make that land an abode of Islam,” the opposite would also be true: “The existence of some non-Islamic rulings in a society where the majority of the rites are Islamic does not render that society non-Muslim.”⁸³⁹ The above arguments clearly show framing in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* to support the new opinions.

The leaders also re-stressed their new approach of taking domestic, regional and international circumstances and the conditions of Muslims into consideration when deciding on Sharia matters. They argued that Muslims live in a world full of challenges, accords and international bodies governed with treaties, agreements and commitments. “These new developments and commitments necessitate the existence of a new contemporary individual and constitutional *ijtihād* on the *Fiqh* of abodes that should be governed by the principles of the Sharia but also takes into consideration the international challenges, the weakness of Muslims and strength of their enemies and the new world order.”⁸⁴⁰ As the above concepts together formed the IG conception of ‘jihad’, the changes in the IG conception of these concepts have influenced its conception of jihad as an Islamic imperative.

After Revisions: Jihad

The leaders counter-framed their previous interpretation of jihad by framing in the *Uṣūlī* principles of ‘means and end’ and ‘harm and benefit’, supported by historical incidents, to argue that ‘jihad’ in its current form must be stopped as it contradicts the end for which it was prescribed. They emphasised that jihad in Islam was never meant to subjugate people or shed their blood. It was a jihad of guidance that was regulated by the Islamic principles that prevent injustice and bloodshed. The most important of these principles is that ‘jihad is a means and not

⁸³⁹ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 50-1.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 51.

an end by itself'. Jihad was not prescribed except to preserve the religion and keep its might and strength. That is why the Prophet would sometimes fight, sometimes go back without fighting, sometimes enter into alliances with non-Muslims, and sometimes make reconciliations and treaties. Because jihad is a means and not an end, it has to be governed by the criteria governing the means. Therefore, jihad becomes impermissible if its conditions and criteria are not met and if it is going to cause harm that influences one of the objectives of the Sharia or one of the reasons why jihad was prescribed. Thereupon, as historical experiences show that jihad in the way practised nowadays by Jihadist movements results in harm and bloodshed without achieving any tangible benefit, it must be banned.

In their discussion of jihad, the leaders criticised some misconceptions related to the interpretation of jihad, basing their argumentations on the pragmatic *Uṣūlī* principle of harm and benefit as well as purposive interpretations of the Sharia, which are all aspects of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. The leaders declared that "it is mistaken in logic and prohibited in the Sharia to believe that jihad is permissible even if it will lead to destruction of the Muslim fighters." Those who fight strong governments are throwing themselves into destruction without achieving any benefit for themselves or for Islam; they rather cause lots of harm, evil and restriction on *da'wa* and preachers, which is prohibited.⁸⁴¹ The leaders also condemned killing civilians during jihad, arguing that even when jihad is necessary, the Islamic law of war makes it prohibited to kill women, children, aged people, people under a covenant of *dhimma*, the blind, clergy men, professionals such as farmers and craftsmen, and civilians who do not participate in the war. Islam also prohibits mutilation of dead bodies, destroying the houses of the fighters, destroying their produce or killing their animals without a justifiable reason or benefit from that.⁸⁴²

The leaders further framed in history and the 'harm and benefit' rule to explain how 'jihad' was misused to justify rebellion against local regimes. Jihad against rulers (rebellion) is prohibited because previous experiences in Islamic history prove that it causes more harm than benefit and results in unwarranted bloodshed. To prove this, the leaders devoted a chapter titled 'A look at history' in which they mentioned five major incidents of rebellion in Islamic history and highlighted the consequences and harm caused by these incidents, and thus concluded that

⁸⁴¹ Ḥāfīz, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 59-66.

⁸⁴² Ḥāfīz, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 70 ff.

rebellion is prohibited for it always leads to harm and bloodshed.⁸⁴³ Speaking about misconceptions in jihad led the leaders to exploring the main reason behind this mistaken understanding of jihad, which is extremism and excessiveness in religion.

After revisions: Excessiveness and Extremism

The IG framed in extremism as one of the main reasons why the youth resort to *takfīr* and fighting against their regimes. Extremism results in rigidity with people and harshness in making *da'wa* and thinking bad of others. It bars having a realistic vision and understanding of the society as the extreme person looks at the society as if it were an angelic society that has no place for mistakes or sins, an approach that can lead to the trap of *takfīr*.⁸⁴⁴

In the IG opinion, extremism and excessiveness occur due to several reasons such as: the lack of religious insight and knowledge which is caused by the tendency to interpret texts literally in accordance with their external meanings only; keeping oneself busy with side issues at the expense of important issues; excessiveness in declaring things prohibited without a sound proof from the Sharia, depending on indecisive texts and leaving the decisive ones; and not acquiring knowledge at the hands of reliable scholars. Extremism is also caused by the lack of experience in life and not learning lessons from history and universal norms, which together block the youth from properly reading the conditions of their societies and the limits of the acceptable or unacceptable ways of change.⁸⁴⁵ Ironically, these were the same critiques directed against the IG by other Muslim movements and scholars who criticised their violence and code of practice. By this, the leaders seem to criticise their own and their followers' practices before revisions.

It is noticeable that when speaking about extremism and its dangers, the leaders relied heavily on the writings of al-Qaraḍāwī especially his book *al-Ṣaḥwa al-Islāmiyya bayna al-Juḥūd wa al-Taṭarruf* (Islamic Revivalism between Rejection and Extremism). Relying heavily on the writings of al-Qaraḍāwī who is intellectually affiliated with the MB indicates the IG openness to other Muslim moderate movements and scholars that they flatly rejected before. Also, the IG discussed the definition, reasons and manifestations of extremism but did not cover its

⁸⁴³ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 101-20. The examples given include the rebellion of al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alīyy against Yazīd b. Mu'awiya in 61 AH, the rebellion of the people of Medina against Yazīd in 63 AH, the rebellion of Zayd b. Ṣarad against Marawān b. Al-Ḥakam in 65 AH, the rebellion of Ibn al-Ash'ath against 'Abd al-Malik b. Marawān in 80 AH and the rebellion of Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd Allāh against al-Manṣūr in 143 AH.

⁸⁴⁴ Ḥāfiẓ, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 30-50.

⁸⁴⁵ Ḥāfiẓ, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 53-7.

consequences or outcomes. They also did not provide clues on how to treat or annihilate extremism though their main source of al-Qaraḍāwī dealt with this extensively.⁸⁴⁶ According to the IG, extremism and its causes were also the main reason behind the wrong understanding of *al-walā' wa al-barā'*

After Revisions: *Al-Walā' wa al-Barā'*

The IG reframed in *walā'* as one of the concepts the misunderstanding of which leads to *takfīr* and extremism. Therefore, they discussed it in the context of speaking about the mistakes made by the youth of the Islamist movements. According to the leaders, some of the youth of Islamist movements considered any *walā'* to disbelievers as an act of disbelief without distinguishing between the external and the internal *muwālāh*. The IG responded to this by emphasising its previous interpretation of *walā'* that divided it into external and internal; and argued that the external *muwālāh*, unlike the internal heart-driven one, does not constitute *kufr*. In this regard, the IG has criticised those who consider the employees of the government to be disbelievers because of *walā'*.⁸⁴⁷

As the ruler and his regime are no longer considered apostate, working for them is no longer a problem. Only in one case can a job cause *kufr*: it is when an employee does a job that involves injustice and oppression while he hates Islam and Muslims and loves disbelief and disbelievers, and signs of this are shown in his actions and sayings. Even in this case the *kufr* is not because of the nature of the job but because of the attitude of the employee.⁸⁴⁸ By this the IG removed those who work for the regime from the refraining group and declared that they are good Muslims.

So, in light of these views regarding *walā'*, it can be concluded that the IG's classification of *walā'* after revisions is not different from its classification before revision. The only difference is that they have removed the discussion on how *walā'* might affect the refraining group. This is because they have revised their understanding of the refraining group and their attitude towards the regime, not because they have revised their conception of *walā'*. Another aspect in the IG new vision of *walā'* is that it emphasised that kind treatment and cooperation with non-

⁸⁴⁶ Rashwān, *Dalīl al-Harakāt*, 291.

⁸⁴⁷ Ḥāfīz, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 165-6.

⁸⁴⁸ Ḥāfīz, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 169-71.

Muslims in a way that does not involve approval or support of their beliefs is recommended and not an act of the prohibited *muwālāh*.⁸⁴⁹

The above concepts were the ones that led to *takfīr* of the ruler and his regime and the subsequent attempt to enforce rebellion against them. The following section shows the concepts that would directly influence the masses and foreigners in the IG dogma, on top of which comes *ḥisba*.

After Revisions: *Ḥisba*

Because *ḥisba* was the most active element in the IG means of change before revisions and because it was *ḥisba* that led to clashes with the regime in late 1980s and early 1990s, the IG devoted a book for *ḥisba* and dealt with it extensively in their revisions. As a group of *ḥisba*, the IG reemphasised the importance of *ḥisba* after revisions. However, the leaders reframed *ḥisba* in light of their new understanding of the relationship between the Islamist movements and the state and the society in general. They reemphasised that *ḥisba* was prescribed to protect the community and to save the creed and teachings of Islam from distortion and negligence. It is a great duty that is necessary for upbringing the individual and the society. The opposite of *ḥisba* is negativity which leads the society to destruction and collapse. Therefore *ḥisba* is still viewed as collective religious obligation that needs sufficient members of *muḥtasibs*, or the entire Ummah will be sinful.⁸⁵⁰

The *muḥtasib* has to observe the etiquettes of *ḥisba* which are sincerity, gentleness and leniency. Also, the *munkar* must be visible and *ḥisba* must not result in a greater harm. Therefore, the *muḥtasib* must also avoid: thinking ill of people, spying on others, disgracing those involved in sins, causing harm to any party and forcing people to commit to his Juristic view. Thus, most of the etiquettes of *ḥisba* are the same as those mentioned before in the IG Charter.⁸⁵¹

However in compliance with the new tolerant and reconciliatory approach, special attention was given to framing in the condition of leniency and gentleness as “a person who is deprived of

⁸⁴⁹ This is discussed in more detail in the section on the IG attitude towards non-Muslims.

⁸⁵⁰ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣṣ wa al-Tabyīn*, 15-20& 26-8.

⁸⁵¹ These conditions were detailed in the previous chapter.

leniency is deprived of all good.”⁸⁵² Harshness could lead to the rejection of the *muhtasib* and reluctance to cooperate with him and might provoke the *muhtasab* ‘alayahi to increase his *munkar*. The leaders admitted that the harsh behaviour of some of those who used to practise *hisba* resulted in creating in people’s minds the image of the *muhtasib* as a stiff, harsh-hearted frowning person, especially with the verbal and physical violations that accompanied *hisba*.⁸⁵³

They also framed in the principles of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* through linking *hisba* to the *Uṣūlī* principles of ‘harm and benefit’ and ‘capacity’. They emphasised that *hisba* must not cause harm to people or to the *muhtasib* himself, in implementation of the Sharia principle that ‘there must not be harm or reciprocation of harm’, and the rule that ‘harm must not be removed by a similar or greater harm’.⁸⁵⁴ Also, the decision to make *hisba* should be based on the power and capacity of the *muhtasib*, which includes his ability to bear the consequences of his *ihtisāb*. The condition of the lack of harm and the ability to bear consequences was extended by stating that this does not apply to the *muhtasib* only but also his parents and relatives. The verses and *ḥadīths* that speak about capacity as a condition for actions to be taken were invoked in this regard.⁸⁵⁵

The new approach brought another change in the leader’s attitude towards considering usefulness and effectiveness of *hisba* by classifying it as a means and not an end. Contrary to the old approach, the IG now frames in pragmatism by adopting an *Uṣūlī* purposive approach and interpretation of *hisba*. It argues that if the *muhtasib* thinks that *hisba* will not yield any positive results, he should not observe it, as *hisba* is not intended for itself but is rather intended for an objective. If this objective cannot be achieved, then the means which is the *hisba* should be left.⁸⁵⁶ Ibn Taymiya’s writings on *hisba* were also utilised by the IG to support and add Salafi credibility to their new thoughts on *hisba* as on other matters.⁸⁵⁷

As the previous framing of *hisba* challenged the authority of the state, the IG now declares its retraction from and condemnation of the old practices that it depicted as ‘a form of rebellion against the state, an aggression against its authority and a rejection of its right to regulate society’. Therefore, the new framing of *hisba* confirms the authority of the state and the ruler who can now appoint official *muhtasibs*. Therefore, there are two kinds of *muhtasibs*: the

⁸⁵² Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 97.

⁸⁵³ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 97-108.

⁸⁵⁴ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 79-81.

⁸⁵⁵ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 121-33.

⁸⁵⁶ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 129.

⁸⁵⁷ Ḥāfīz, *Al-Nuṣḥ wa al-Tabyīn*, 122 ff.

appointed and the volunteer. As the escalating steps of *ḥisba* are the same as in the previous view, the new view argues that only the appointed *muḥtasib* can follow these escalating steps that include threatening of use of force.

Volunteer *muḥtasibs* can only assist if requested by the state-appointed *muḥtasib*, and they are not allowed to intervene if the latter is present or can easily be summoned in a time enough to prevent that *munkar*. However, intervention of the non-appointed *muḥtasib* should be restricted to crimes or *munkars* that are commonly recognised as such by the society and the Law such as rape or killing. The *muḥtasib* should not intervene at all if preventing the *munkar* would break the law of the state or if the kind of *munkar* being practised is commonly acceptable to people in this area or if the harm resulting from preventing that *munkar* is greater than the benefit.⁸⁵⁸

The above arguments show that the IG maintained most of its previous interpretations of *ḥisba* with exception of the points that caused clash with the authorities. In this regard, the IG argued, contrary to their previous arguments, that forced *ḥisba* is not for unauthorised individuals and that the main task of the non-appointed *muḥtasib* is to help, not to oppose and challenge, the state and the police perform their duties of forbidding *munkar*.⁸⁵⁹ By this, the IG retracts its previous view that forced *ḥisba* can be done by everyone even common people. The old view emphasised this as the IG did not acknowledge the legitimacy of the ruler or those appointed by him, but now the regime is legitimate and so are those appointed by it.

When it comes to *munkar* things that are not prohibited by law and not forbidden by the police, practising *ḥisba* in this regard was disallowed by the IG through framing in the *Usūlī* principle of harm and benefit. The IG argued that, based on previous experience, making forced *ḥisba* by individuals on these matters would result in harm that is greater than the benefit of forbidding these evil; so change with force is disallowed based on the principle of harm and benefit.⁸⁶⁰ By this the IG has placed many constraints on practicing *ḥisba* that made it practically limited to those appointed by the state i.e., policemen except in cases that the society sees it legitimate for common people to use force such as preventing rape, killing or the like.

⁸⁵⁸ Ḥāfiẓ, *Al-Nuṣṣ wa al-Tabyīn*, 153-4; Stein, "Egypt's Jama'a Islamiyya," 875.

⁸⁵⁹ Interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 38.

⁸⁶⁰ Interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 39.

Stein notes in his study on the IG *hisba* that this even agrees with the legal environment in Western communities where normal people are allowed to use force to prevent life threatening crimes from taking place. Therefore the IG new conception of *hisba* has become a mandate for a form of civic responsibility leading up to citizen's arrest that would not be unusual in most Western countries.⁸⁶¹ Stein further notes that the IG new approach to *hisba* shows unwarranted confidence in the self-regulatory potential of Egyptian patriarchal society and authoritarian governance, as well as an appeal to the positive role of official law enforcement that many Egyptians would find excessively optimistic.

It also ignores the fact that the Egyptian police exercises a very limited degree of control over behaviour in many areas and, where it is actively present, is regarded as aggressive, unreliable and corrupt. Thus, the new interpretation of *hisba* that assumes the presence of an official police system that is respected and considered just by the public is as fanciful as the old one. In another sense, the IG previous thoughts stemmed from an ideal Salafi vision of the world and the rejection of the legitimacy of the regime, while it now proceeds from an idealised view of existing state–society relations in Egypt.⁸⁶²

However, this is not applicable to *hisba* only but is rather a general approach in the revisions as the IG not only avoided blaming the regime but also lauded the state and its efforts in several occasions and unreasonably justified the official stances of the Egyptian regime on several issues. Examples include lauding the Egyptian foreign policy towards the Palestinian issue and describing it as rational, fair and for the benefit of the Palestinian people; a description that is considered unjustifiable and unrealistic by most of the peaceful political players in Egypt.

Another example was the IG declaration that they would 'accept any form of activity that the state would allow them'.⁸⁶³ This is also confirmed by the IG severe criticism of Islamists who challenged the state and 'caused a lot of harm to Muslims' without assigning any sort of blame to the state or speaking about harm caused by the state's tyranny, corruption and confiscation of freedoms and rights. The IG condemnation and severe criticism of all acts of violence that happened before the revisions without similar criticism of the state or providing a vision on the role of the state in putting an end to violence by treating its socio-political and economic

⁸⁶¹ Stein, "Egypt's Jama'a Islamiyya," 875-6.

⁸⁶² Stein, "Egypt's Jama'a Islamiyya," 876.

⁸⁶³ Karam Zuhdi in interview with Ahmad, *Mu'āmarā am Murāja'a*, 55.

reasons—all of this made the IG seem like a governmental tool meant only to criticise and attack the political violence of the government's rivals.

The attempt of the IG leaders to not directly criticise the regime is perhaps the reason behind their approach of giving examples of problems and challenges that happened in the past while ignoring the present and the future. This is clear in their discussion of *hisba* as all the examples of wrong practices of *hisba* given by the leaders are within the context of individual behaviour or moral practices of individuals, not of the state or the regime, such as destroying musical instruments or burning video shops and breaking into houses of people to find if they are committing adultery. All of these are individual past occurrences. No single contemporary political issue is mentioned or criticised; and there is no discussion of the challenges facing Islamic movements with the aim of finding future solutions for them.

The same applies to the leader's discussion of the constraints of jihad and the concept of harm and benefit. Though plenty of details were given on the importance of the context and reality, a deep and detailed reading of contemporary national, regional and international realities was not provided. All what was provided in this regard is a critique of not considering the past realities and a call for not repeating the mistakes in addition to a very simplistic explanation of how any conflict between the Islamist movements and their local regime will benefit only Israel, the West and extreme secularists. Indeed, the IG new interpretations of *hisba* branches from its conception of the relationship between the state and the Islamist movement as well as from the change in its attitudes towards state-approved principles of democracy and political life.

After revisions: Relationship with the State, Democracy and Participation in Political Life

This section highlights the IG's post-revisionist attitudes towards the state, its institutions and tools of democracy as well as its Muslim and non-Muslim members and movements. Though before revisions the IG completely refused democratic ways of change and considered them as heretic and anti-Islamic, they did not write directly on their views towards democracy and participation in political life after revisions. However, the IG vision of the relationship between the state and the Islamic movements reflects some of that. The leaders framed in the general principles of 'efficacy', 'benefit and harm' and 'role distribution' to argue that the state should make use of the power and efforts of Muslim youth in developing the society and refining its manners while Islamist movements have to completely renounce violence and prove to the

governments that they do not want to seize their thrones. So, Islamic movements in general should leave sovereign matters to the state and the state should leave the moral, social, reformist and educational role to the Islamic movements. And there must be no conflict on power that Islamists will not obtain; and if they were to obtain it, they would be forced to leave it under international and regional pressures as happened with Hamas in Palestine and the Taliban in Afghanistan.⁸⁶⁴

This argument of the IG is a representation of what is known as 'political learning' in a range of studies such as those on social choice and rational choice theories, social movement studies, and the literature on democratisation. 'Political learning' refers to the process through which individuals or groups modify their political beliefs and tactics as a result of severe crises, frustrations, and dramatic changes in the environment.⁸⁶⁵ This argument of the IG confirms Huntington's note that the 'desirability of compromise' is not only based on one's own experiences but also on witnessing and learning from the experiences of others.⁸⁶⁶

Thus, the IG saw itself after revisions as a social movement whose main role is to make *da'wa* and spread virtue and proper Islamic education in the society. They did not have political aspirations, perhaps because of the restrictions laid upon them by the Mubarak regime that did not allow them to disrupt its plans and hegemony of power even through peaceful political means. This is supported by the fact that after the fall of the Mubarak regime, the IG became politically active. The Group's active political participation was reflected in its establishment of a political party, participation in elections and drafting of the Egyptian constitution,⁸⁶⁷ which practically confirms the changes in their attitudes towards democracy and participation in political life and their acceptance of democracy as a tool of social and political change. As with other concepts, this change is based on the IG's re-evaluation of these issues away from the creedal concept of *ḥākimiyya* by placing them on the Juristic side of the Sharia which is characterised by pragmatism and the adoption of principles of harm and benefit.

⁸⁶⁴ Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu ghayr al-'Unf," interview in *Mufakkirat al-Islām website* ([25 January 2007] Last accessed: 30 May 2016). Available at: <http://islammemo.cc/Tahkikat/hewarat/2007/01/25/30032.html>.

⁸⁶⁵ Nancy Bermeo, "Democracy and the Lessons of Dictatorship," *Comparative Politics* (24 [April 1992]), 273; Wickham, "The Path to Moderation," 214; Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates," 362.

⁸⁶⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 174.

⁸⁶⁷ For a meticulous discussion and further information on the IG active social and political positions after the 2011 revolution in Egypt, see Ashour, "Egypt's Revolution," 184-86; Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 351-4.

However, there is disagreement among the historical leaders in their personal practical and political attitudes towards participation in political life after the collapse of the Mubarak regime. This disagreement is reflected by the fact that only some of them have engaged in political life while others disappeared completely from the political scene, even after the fall of Mubarak. This is also confirmed by the oft-repeated attitude of the main ideologue, Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, which he expressed in many of his writings both before and after the fall of the Mubarak regime; that Islamist movements should quit political work and engage only in charitable activities and *da'wa*.⁸⁶⁸

Ibrāhīm always argues that “political work would put Islamist movements in confrontation with the state and the West.... and even if Islamists win elections, they will be forced to leave power as happened with Hamas and the Taliban.”⁸⁶⁹ However, this disagreement on political participation differs dramatically from the previous pre-revisions position, as the previous approach considered political participation an act of disbelief while those who reject participation after revisions consider it lawful, but pragmatically unsuitable to Islamist movements, who should concentrate mainly on *da'wa* and guidance.

Such internal disagreements are common among social movements and are called ‘frame disputes’ or ‘framing contests’ that occur not only between movements and their opponents but also internally. However, as in the case of the IG, internal disputes are essentially differences of opinion over reality, or about frame resonance, which entails disagreements regarding how reality should be presented to maximise mobilisation and future gains.⁸⁷⁰ So, the IG leaders’ disagreement on the efficacy and consequences of participation in political life is an example of the IG leaders’ internal disputes about the interpretation of present or projected reality. The disagreement over framing of the motivational frames that encourage engaging in political life constitutes a dispute about the resonance of these frames and processes. In addition, the fact that political and democratic participation was undertaken by the IG, and not by al-Jihād, indicates that while Islamists may rationally respond to opportunity structures, “the menu of

⁸⁶⁸ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.” For more details on the disagreement among the leaders after the collapse of the Mubarak regime, See, Ashour, “Egypt’s Revolution,” 184-6.

⁸⁶⁹ See, e.g., Ibrāhīm, “A-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 53.

⁸⁷⁰ Robert Benford, “Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement,” *Social Forces* (71, no. 3 [March 1993]), 691.

possible responses are often limited by ideological parameters that may render some choices unimaginable.”⁸⁷¹

After Revisions: The Attitudes towards other Muslims

The change of the attitudes towards the above categories entailed a similar change in the attitudes towards other Muslim members of the society that the IG used to describe before as ‘the other’. The new positions show that IG after revisions is trying not only to rebuild itself peacefully but also to reintroduce itself as an interface between the society and the state. The tolerant, lenient discourse and strong presence of the IG leaders in public debates and discussions and involvement in interviews and public issues, particularly after the collapse of the Mubarak regime, suggest that the Group is trying to reintroduce itself to the society as an effective public social force to get its old image corrected.

The IG refashioned its relationship with other Islamist movements by framing in the general Islamic principles of tolerance, cooperation, understanding and respect. Unlike before, the IG emphasised its openness to all other Islamic movements despite the existence of some differences in views and means of achieving objectives. The literature on revisions exhibits openness to all Sunni groups and reference to writings of scholars from different orientations. The leaders in their writings even defended some scholars whom they considered deviant before, such as al-Qaraḍāwī, Ibn Bāz and scholars of al-Azhar.⁸⁷²

In its discourse with other Islamist movements, the IG used a reconciliatory tone, particularly in situations where the IG holds views different from those of these movements. This is reflected in the fact that the leaders would always emphasise that they do not suspect or question the faith or sincerity of other movements who disagree with them.⁸⁷³ Though the leaders sometimes blamed and severely criticised some practices of Islamists, they never questioned their sincerity or religious credentials. Contrary to the previous approach of clash and hostility, the leaders in their revisions used reconciliatory terms like ‘Islamic movements, Muslim youth, youth of the Islamic movement, youth of this Ummah, the righteous people who gave priority to the Hereafter over this world, our brothers’ etc. By this the leaders always remind the readers of the Islamic nature of those who differ with the IG in their Islamic interpretations and the fact that

⁸⁷¹ Wiktorowicz, “Islamic Activism and SMT,” 209.

⁸⁷² Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.”

⁸⁷³ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā‘a al-Islāmiyya,” 42.

they have some differences with them does not mean that the other groups are deviant or that they are less religious or sincere than the IG.

Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, the IG main Ideologue, explained the IG attitude towards other Muslim movements by emphasising that the IG leaders and members ‘love and wish good for all Muslims in general and members of Islamic movements in particular.’ They ‘read for all scholars and Jurists of the Islamic Movement’, and they ‘defend them when they are attacked’.⁸⁷⁴ They see that ‘work for Islam is open for all’, and that after their hard experience in prison the IG members are, ‘no longer fanatic to a specific individual, group or country’.⁸⁷⁵ They rather ‘wish good for all those who wronged or imprisoned them. They “came out of prison with love to everybody and certainty that mercy is the greatest of all the manners of Islam and that Islam can be summarised in two statements: glorifying God and having mercy on His creatures.”⁸⁷⁶

He extended this beyond the IG by advising all Muslims to love those who differ with them in beliefs or intellectual or Juristic orientations as long as ‘others’ do not contradict the founding principles of the religion.⁸⁷⁷ Comparing these new conciliatory language and acceptance of others with the old approach of clash and hard language reveals the magnitude of change in the ideology between the old ideology that was dismissive of other movements and the new approach that is inclusive and accommodative of others. The old views framed in *ḥākimiyya*, *jihad* and *barā’* while the new ones framed in the general principles of the Sharia such as tolerance, cooperation and understanding as well as in the concepts of harm and benefit. Thus, the IG new position towards ‘the other’ moved towards a pluralist conception that emphasises plurality and cooperation instead of the previous singular exclusionist voice.

After Revisions: The Attitudes towards non-Muslims

The IG also revised its conception of the relationship with non-Muslims by framing in the general principles of the Sharia and reframing the concepts of ‘*amān*’ ‘*dhimma*’ and ‘*al-walā’ wa al-barā’*’ that were utilised before to shape the old antagonistic view. These are divided below

⁸⁷⁴ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.”

⁸⁷⁴ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 51-2.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.”

⁸⁷⁵ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 51-2.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.”

⁸⁷⁶ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya,” 51-2.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibrāhīm, “Al-Jamā’a al-Islāmiyya Ladayhā mā Tuqaddimuhu.”

into local non-Muslim residents of Muslim lands, foreign non-Muslims visiting Muslim lands (tourists) and foreign non-Muslims who live in non-Muslim countries. As opposed to the previous ideology that adopted clash in dealing with non-Muslims, the new ideology argues that Islam has not come to abolish the right of others to exist and coexist with Muslims. To the contrary, Islam has endorsed principles of peaceful coexistence between Muslims and those who disagree with them in faith as long as they did not transgress against Muslims. Peaceful coexistence is the norm of Islam and Muslims with those who live with them in Muslim countries and is also the norm of Muslims with those whom they live with in non-Muslim countries. History was used to support this line of argument when the leaders argued that such was the practice of the companions of the prophet when they lived with the Christians in Abyssinia in peace and coexistence.⁸⁷⁸ This time, the Islamic instructions on tolerance, peaceful coexistence and cooperation with non-Muslims were mentioned and the claim they were abrogated was not used.

However, in an attempt to introduce balanced views that protect their understanding of the concept of *al-walā' wa al-barā*, the leaders argued that peaceful coexistence and kind treatment of others do not mean accepting the religion or creed of non-Muslims, but it means acknowledging their right to exist and choose their religions and creeds without compulsion while preserving Muslims' right to disagree with them and renounce their beliefs. Therefore, coexistence and mutual understanding must replace fighting and clashes. The leaders also emphasised their belief in the coexistence of cultures through dialogue and cooperation and their rejection of the clash of civilisations theory.⁸⁷⁹

Even in case of wars, Islam has laid many moral rules and regulations to minimise the consequences of wars and protect human rights. So war in Islam is not meant to subjugate or annihilate others but to remove harm and corruption from humanity.⁸⁸⁰ Thus, framing in the general principles of the Sharia enabled the leaders to replace the previous attitude of clash, hatred and inevitability of confrontation with the new approach that promotes reconciliation and coexistence. This is applicable to all non-Muslims including residents of Islamic countries.

After Revisions: Local Non-Muslims (*Dhimmīs*) and *Jizya*

⁸⁷⁸ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 51-2.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 52-3.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 52-3.

The new attitudes of the IG towards local non-Muslim minorities is characterised by tolerance and kind treatment as it framed mainly in the general principles of the Sharia rather than in the concepts of *dhimma* and *jizya*. The general line of discussion when speaking about People of the Book emphasises the dangers of mistreating or abusing them and the importance of dealing with them according to the principles of justice as a sublime Islamic principle because the Quran (60:8) instructs Muslims to treat non-Muslims kindly and with justice.⁸⁸¹

Again, to preserve the classical concept of '*muwālāh*' and keep the new views balanced, the leaders emphasised that treating non-Muslims kindly and with justice is not a form of the prohibited *muwālāh*. The prohibited *muwālāh* is to love or support the religion or creed of disbelievers or spy on Muslims for their benefit, to prefer their religion to that of Muslims or to help them fight Muslims. So the prohibited *muwālāh* does not include treating them with justice and kindness as Islam ordains justice and kindness on Muslims in their dealings with everyone. Kindness to non-Muslims is, therefore, a 'following of the Prophetic manners'.⁸⁸²

The previous hostile attitude towards the Christian of Egypt was based on three justifications. The first was political: to pressurise the regime to accept the IG demands by showing its inability to defend the minorities and forcing it to buy the security of the Copts with the security of the IG members. The second was a theological stance that viewed the necessity of punishing the Copts for breaking the contract of *dhimma* by not paying the *jizya*. The third was financial to fund the IG activities from the money of the Copts which the IG considered as lawful booties as the Christians broke the terms of the covenant of *dhimma*.

Placing pressure on the state is no longer needed after the initiative and the concept of *Jizya* was revised to arrive at the conclusion that targeting the Copts is impermissible and consequently their money and properties are no longer considered violable. Though the IG leaders did not challenge the classical interpretation of the concept of *dhimma*, they argued that as long as People of the Book showed their willingness to have a contract of *dhimma* with Muslims and pay the *jizya*, they have to be given that right, and fighting or harassing them because of *jizya* becomes impermissible even if the contract of *dhimma* is not effective. This is because Muslim countries nowadays do not ask People of the Book to pay *jizya* and do not hold contracts of *dhimma* with them.

⁸⁸¹ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 176-9.

⁸⁸² Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Adwā'*, 180-1.

To prove that, the leaders employed history to argue that *jizya* was not always a basic element of the contract of *dhimma* when they argued that the second Caliph 'Umar once doubled the charity paid by the Christians of Taghlib in return for dropping *Jizya* from them and that the Prophet's Companion Abu 'Ubayda returned the *jizya* to some Syrian Christians when he had to withdraw from their city without defending it. They also argued that the Christians of Egypt continued to pay *jizya* until the ruler of Egypt dropped it when he decided to appoint them in the Egyptian army to joint Muslims in defending the country. This was based on a fatwa at that time that when People of the Book defend the country with Muslims, the *jizya* should be dropped from them because it was taken from them in return for defence in which they now have participated.⁸⁸³

Additionally, the leaders framed in the *Fiqh* of sovereign matters when they stated that there are some commitments attached to the contract of *dhimma* that only the Muslim state, not individuals or groups, can provide. These commitments include defending People of the Book against transgression and giving them security. Because 'those who work for Islam' cannot give that protection or defend People of the Book and because Muslim countries are not fully ruled according to the Sharia and do not demand *jizya* from them, it is not permissible for individuals or groups to fight non-Muslims as it is not they who refused to pay the *jizya* but it is the Muslim state who did not demand it from them. Therefore the Muslim youth should not blame the Christians of Egypt or conduct any violent acts against them because of that.⁸⁸⁴ This has become acceptable now though it was not before because the governing authorities are now considered legitimate and therefore their decisions are legitimate whereas in the past they were considered apostate and therefore their decisions were not accepted.

As with other concepts, the new interpretations of *jizya* were also reframed in light of the *Uṣūlī* concept of 'harm and benefit'. The leaders argued that incidents of violence against Christians in Egypt based on the mistaken understanding of the concept of *jizya* did not achieve any benefit but rather caused much bloodshed and harm, put restrictions on *da'wa* and gave more chances for secularists to influence people and agitate them against Islamists.⁸⁸⁵ Also, the international context was utilised to justify the cancellation of *jizya* based on the same *Uṣūlī* concept of 'harm and benefit'. The Leaders argue that no Muslim country nowadays dares to break the

⁸⁸³ Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 182-3; Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 82.

⁸⁸⁴ Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 82-6.

⁸⁸⁵ Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 182-3; Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 82-6.

internationally implemented system of citizenship as it will result in international isolation of that country, intervention of other countries and might lead that country to end up occupied by foreign powers under the pretext of protecting religious minorities. They also utilised the *Uṣūlī* principle that ‘collective benefit takes precedence over the individual one’. They argued that because Islam gave priority to collective (national) benefit over that of individuals and groups, it is not logical to accept that a Muslim country be occupied, economically besieged or isolated from the World because of *jizya* or because of a single ruling of the Islamic Sharia.⁸⁸⁶

The foregoing arguments show that IG reinterpretation of the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslim residents of Muslim countries was based on the same traditional concept of *dhimma* without going further or accepting more reformist interpretations that tried to develop a new concept that replaces *dhimma* based on the argument that the concept of *dhimma* was developed in a context and circumstances that have been replaced by new political, historical and international contexts in which states are based on the principles of citizenship. Therefore these reformist interpretations argue that the contract of *dhimma* was a historical contract whose reasons and justifications have come to an end with the arrival of new national states and the adoption of citizenship as a system in these countries based on general legal and constitutional rules.⁸⁸⁷ Thus the IG handling of this and similar issues shows its commitment to the traditional Salafi approach and traditional Islamic Jurisprudence as well as a refusal of new interpretation based merely on contextual circumstances without reliance on textual evidences.

So, the IG conception of the relationship with People of the Book has partly changed as *Jizya* was overlooked because Muslim states dropped it not because the IG accepted the principles of citizenship as criteria that provide equal rights to citizens irrespective of their religious or dogmatic affiliations. The new position of the IG towards the Christians of Egypt and non-adoption of the new national system of citizenship would off course be considered as insufficient and unsatisfactory for the government, Christians and secularists of Egypt and might affect the entire process of revisions. Therefore, the IG did not publish its book on People of the Book. The book was available on the IG website for a very short period and suddenly

⁸⁸⁶ Nājiḥ Ibrāḥīm, “Ḥiwār Nājiḥ Ibrāḥīm ma’a al-‘Arabiyya dut nit,” *the IG website*. Available at: <http://egvig.com/Public/articles/interview/6/56260817.shtml> (Accessed 14 December 2013).

⁸⁸⁷ An example of these new interpretation is that presented by Fahmī Huwaidī in his book ‘Citizens not Dhimmīs’. See Fahmī Huwaidī, *Muwāṭṭinūn Lā Dhimmiyyūn*, 3rd edition (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 1999).

disappeared and was never published until now.⁸⁸⁸ However, this shows that IG new frames do not merely present views to please the government or specific people or groups; they present only what they are convinced of. This also reemphasises the previously stated fact that for Islamist movements, possible responses to challenges are limited by ideological restrictions that may bar some movements from considering or accepting particular choices.

Regarding non-Muslims who come to Muslim countries for tourism, business or other affairs, these are treated according to the concept of *amān* rather than *jizya*. The change of considering the regime to be Muslim and legitimate entailed a similar change in the attitude towards the visa issued by this regime. Though in the old view the IG considered visitors of Islamic countries to be in a contract of *amān*, this contract of *amān* was not considered valid because of the visa given to them but because of what non-Muslims understood as *amān* though in fact it was not. Now as the regime is Muslim, the visa issued by the regime is a sound contract of *amān* that cannot be violated. This *amān* applies to visas granted for any reason whether tourism, work, visit or any other purpose. As this visa is a valid contract of *amān*, it is impermissible to afflict those non-Muslims with any kind of harm.⁸⁸⁹

In this regard the leaders admitted that their argument that they targeted tourism and not tourists was mistaken as targeting tourism will often result in killing or injuring tourists, which is prohibited. They supported this with the *Uṣūlī* rule which states that “whatever leads to a forbidden act is forbidden even if it was originally permissible.”⁸⁹⁰ This may suggest that the IG sees that targeting tourism is originally permissible but it becomes prohibited because it results in killing or harming tourists, which is impermissible. Yet, the leaders elsewhere said that tourism involves things that are permissible, things which are impermissible and things which are reprehensible and therefore permissibility of working in tourism depends on the nature of the work and its compatibility with the Sharia. The leaders also concluded that it is permissible for any Muslim country to dedicate part of its resources and efforts to attract tourists in order to generate other sources of income and help the country towards progress. However, this must

⁸⁸⁸ The book was written by ‘Āsim ‘Abd al-Mājid and titled *Īdāḥ al-Jawab...Su’ālāt Ahl al-Kitāb*. ‘I have got a soft copy of that book before it was deleted from the website and it generally pronounces the same views expressed above but with more details and explanations. No explanation was given as to why the book was removed from the website and why it was not published. Most likely this was because of actual or anticipated governmental pressure as the views expressed in the book were not satisfactory for the government and secularists.

⁸⁸⁹ Ḥāfīz, *Taslīḥ al-Adwā’*, 86-100.

⁸⁹⁰ Ḥāfīz, *Taslīḥ al-Adwā’*, 100.

be governed by preserving the Islamic customs and traditions of Muslim countries.⁸⁹¹ This reflects a change in the attitude towards tourism which was previously considered, all of it, impermissible and a threat against the Islamic identity of Egypt.

The leaders supported their prohibition of targeting tourists by framing in 'harm and benefit' and the 'international context'. They have argued that aggression against tourists would be met by a similar aggression of the countries of those tourists against Muslims as they would consider Islam as a religion that calls for violence and bloodshed, which would make these countries ally against Islam and consider it to be their enemy. As this would result in harm to Islam, it must be prevented.

After Revisions: The Enemy (Exceptions from the IG Attitudes towards 'the Other')

Despite the new reconciliatory tone and acceptance of 'the other', the IG leaders did not forsake the pre-revisionist idea of the 'enemy' who is plotting against the Ummah though their conception of the enemy before revisions is different from that after revisions. The main enemy before revisions was the local regime. Now the enemy is either an abstract enemy represented in poverty and backwardness or a physical enemy represented in Israel, the West as well as the extreme secularists. This raises questions on the centrality of the concept of the enemy in the intellectual and organisational heritage of the IG.

However, the concept of the enemy here is mentioned within the context of justifying the new stances. By framing in the concepts of enemy and the surrounding dangers, the leaders managed to portray a state of danger threatening the Muslim community and Muslim countries, which requires unity and change of attitudes towards other segments of the community to confront that danger. Furthermore, framing in the concept of the enemy helps bring the new ideology more into line with prevailing norms and mores, which is one of the strategic processes affecting frame resonance.

Thereupon, the leaders argue that the fight between the state and the Islamist movement has to stop because it weakens both of them and allows the enemies to weaken or destroy both of them. The power of the state and the Islamist movement has to be directed towards their common real enemies rather than towards each other. As a result, violence has to stop in order

⁸⁹¹ Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 117-8.

not to give a further chance for the enemies of Egypt to exploit incidents of violence to distort the image of Islam. These enemies, according to the IG, agree on one goal, despite their differences, which is destroying Muslims and their countries. The first enemy is an abstract enemy that threatens everybody. This is poverty and backwardness. This type of enemy did not receive detailed discussion from the IG despite its importance. The second type of enemy is a physical enemy which includes three categories: Israel, America and the West and extreme secularists.

According to the IG⁸⁹² Israel, with the help of the West, is trying to launch several types of military, economic, cultural and psychological wars against Egypt and other Muslim countries. By launching these three wars, Israel wants to marginalise or abort Egypt's role, which would be the most serious consequence of the conflict with the Jewish state. Surrender of Egypt to attempts of marginalisation would allow Israel to freely do what it wants in the area and would waste the rights of Muslims in and outside Palestine as this will deprive the Palestinians from the biggest support they receive from the biggest Arab country against the Israeli weaponry supported by all Western countries.⁸⁹³ By this, the IG has practically revoked the previous ideology of the near enemy but retained their conception of the far enemy though the strategy of fighting that far enemy has been changed. Now the previous 'near enemy' is an ally in the IG resistance against the 'far enemy' and the previous major enemy of Islam is now the protector and defender of Ummah.

The second physical enemy, according to the IG, is America and the West who consider Islamist movements as their enemy after communism and the Soviet Union. Therefore, they hold meetings to confront this new threat and to instigate Arab and Muslim countries against Islamic movements. The objectives of these countries is to end or limit Egypt's leading role in the area by placing it in domestic fights and confrontations with the Islamist movements so that Israel would replace Egypt as the leader of the area and would neutralise Egypt's power, which will make Egypt unable to confront the Zionist threat and stop its aggressive expansion.

On the other hand, Western countries encourage confrontations with Islamist movements as their goal of capturing the treasures and riches of these countries would not be achieved unless Muslim peoples are busy with domestic fights and continuous internal upheavals that would

⁸⁹² Ḥāfīz, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 40-3.

⁸⁹³ Ḥāfīz, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 40-3.

give them no chance to confront their original enemies and achieve their own welfare and progress. Therefore, Muslims must not yield to Western pressures, whether military, economic, financial or technical. This requires of Egypt and Muslims to unite their efforts and powers and advance in all walks of life to be able exist in a new world order that has no place except for the powerful.⁸⁹⁴

Thus, the IG framing in the concept of foreign enemy both before and after revisions is in line with the framing of most Islamist movements that follow a similar discourse. According to Wiktorowicz, “An important component of most Islamist diagnostic frames is to blame the spread of Western values and practices for a wide variety of social ills...Most frames go a step further and argue that this process of cultural imperialism is a conscious Western strategy to weaken Muslim societies for economic, political, and military purposes. International institutions, media outlets, the marketplace, and secular modernization projects are all framed as vehicles for the strategic infusion of alien value systems calculated to undermine the strength of Islam.”⁸⁹⁵

As the IG new framing in the concept of the enemy is meant to justify the new stances and make them necessary without calling for violence, the leaders argue, despite all of the aforementioned dangers and violations, that all of this does not necessitate war or clash between Muslims and these countries as “the relationship between Egypt and other non-Muslim countries must be based on cooperation and mutual interests not on war and conflict.”⁸⁹⁶ Moreover, the tyranny of the enemies does not justify killing or attacking their civilian subjects. The leaders argued that in spite of the American tyranny, violation of the sanctities of Muslims, usurping their resources, occupying their lands and shedding their blood in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as their support to the Israelis in killing Muslim children and violating the sanctity of Jerusalem, Islam does not consider these violations a valid justification of indiscriminate killing of Americans just for being American citizens. A distinction must be made between the military and the civil Americans and also between women and children and between military men etc. Therefore, the indiscriminate attacks on Western civilians are

⁸⁹⁴ Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 43-4.

⁸⁹⁵ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism*, 16-17.

⁸⁹⁶ Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 189-90.

impermissible as Muslims have entered their countries with a valid contract of *amān* that makes harming or killing them impermissible.⁸⁹⁷

The leaders amplified this interpretation by emphasising that the relationship with the West is not based only on military issues, but is rather a complicated relationship that involves cooperation, alliance and other forms of interaction. This is also framed and weighed with the scale of ‘capacity’ and ‘harm and benefit’ based on the argument that targeting the West by jihadists’ attacks renders it into a wild enemy against Islam and Muslims. Therefore, a specific group or organisation must not put all of the Muslim Ummah in confrontations that they are not ready for as the Ummah is undergoing the worst phase in its history. “This phase requires wisdom and rationality in actions and practices and a good planning to face the great economic, educational and social challenges facing the Ummah, rather than putting it in unwanted and unequal confrontations.”⁸⁹⁸

The third enemy is the extreme secularists (*ghulāt al-‘almāniyīn*). The IG states that the majority of the Egyptian secularists are good and give priority to the interests of their countries over their own interests. Yet, some of these secularists ignored the interests of Egypt and the rights of others and paid attention only to their own interests at the expense of those of the country and the society. Therefore, they always behaved in hostility towards Islamic movements by instigating against them and calling for their annihilation. They further tried their best to plant discord between the government and Islamists and bring any possible agreement between the two into failure so that the confrontations would weaken both the government and Islamists and allow secularists to take control.⁸⁹⁹ Thus, despite considering extreme secularists as enemies, the rhetoric towards ‘moderate secularists’ was moderated. Even though the new vision still denounces secular ideologies, it now recognises secularists as an integral part of the Egyptian society.⁹⁰⁰

These are the three enemies that the IG post-revisionist thought sees as the real enemy that needs to be confronted. This new characterisation of the enemy is meant in principle to indicate

⁸⁹⁷ Ibrāhīm, *Tafjīrāt al-Riyād*, 116.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibrāhīm, *Tafjīrāt al-Riyād*, 116-17.

⁸⁹⁹ Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-‘Unf*, 43-6; Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā*, 17. Examples of the campaigns of instigation against Islamists by extreme secularists include writing in mass media against Islamists and calling for their annihilation and the secularists’ stark attacks on the minister of interior who tried to end the IG violence through mediation of some renowned Muslim scholars. Secularists attacked the minister and his attempt and accused him of accommodating and reconciling with ‘terrorism’, which resulted in failure of reconciliation and the sacking of the minister.

⁹⁰⁰ Hamzawy and Grebowksi, “From Violence to Moderation,” 12.

that the real enemy is not the regime or the ruler. Therefore, instead of fighting the regime and the ruler, they should receive support and cooperation from Islamist movements as they have a common enemy that both Islamist movements and the regime need to fight against. Though ample space was spent on explaining how dangerous these enemies are, no details are given on how to confront and neutralise their threats especially when it comes to the West and extreme secularists.

The leaders wrote only about the need to revive the leading role of Egypt and the need to be united without saying how this can be achieved. Furthermore, though the IG main Ideologue criticised and argued against the conspiracy theory in one of his books,⁹⁰¹ the leaders' conception of these enemies and how they conspire against Islam and Islamists explain how the IG adopts this theory in practice despite the rejection of its main ideologue to it in theory. This could be also interpreted as differences of views among the leaders regarding this issue.

A Summary of the views

The above views represented the IG new dogma and ideology after revisions. However, due to the length and variation of the above overviews, it would be beneficial to account the reader with a short brief of these views before delving into the dynamism of these stances and their general analysis. In order for the IG to revise its previous thoughts, it had to provide a different interpretation of the concept of *ḥākimiyya*. So the leaders presented a new vision of *ḥākimiyya* and the relationship between the ruler and subjects. They argued that non-implementation of the Sharia cannot be considered disbelief unless it is accompanied by rejection of God's commandment or preference of man-made laws to those of God.

They also argued that there is a human *ḥākimiyya* that does not conflict with the Divine one, but rather works within and complements that of God. They also devoted a book⁹⁰² to sovereign matters where they argued that sovereign matters such as launching wars, carrying out corporal punishments, holding peace treaties and domestic security are to be undertaken only by the state and not open to common people or groups as these matters require special power that is not available except for rulers and their representative irrespective of their religious commitment.

⁹⁰¹ Ibrāhīm, *Tajdīd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī*, 81-6.

⁹⁰² Ibrāhīm, *Taṭbīq al-Aḥkām*.

As they employed some fatwas of classical Muslim scholars, such as the fatwas of Ibn Taymiya on the Tartars, to justify violence in the pre-revision period, the IG leaders have revised their interpretations of these fatwas and their application to contemporary regimes. The leaders acknowledged that the application of these fatwas to contemporary regimes is erroneous and have concluded that contemporary regimes and armies of Muslim countries are completely different from those of the Tartars and therefore using analogy to compare those to these is erroneous. The leaders also revised some of the concepts that they took for granted in the previous stage such as 'inevitability of confrontation', and they concluded that 'nothing is inevitable except that which is made so by God'. Thus, confrontation with regime is not inevitable as the fact that their cause is fair and legitimate does not mean that they have to fight to fulfil their demands.

The IG rethinking of *ḥākimiyya* and its consequence *takfīr* and rebellion and their confession that their application of old fatwas to contemporary regimes was wrong led them to rethinking the concept of jihad as a whole. They argued that jihad is meant for defence and guidance and that is why it was regulated by the Islamic principles and criteria that prevent bloodshed. Because jihad is a means and not an end, it has to be governed by the criteria governing means. So, it becomes impermissible if its conditions and criteria are not met and if it is going to cause harm that influences one of the objectives of the Sharia or one of the reasons why jihad was prescribed. Thereupon, as experience shows that 'jihad' in the way practised nowadays by Jihadist movements, results in harm and bloodshed without achieving any tangible benefit, it must be banned.

Also, the IG criticised their old understanding and application of the concepts of *walā'*, *jizya* and revised their relationship with 'the other' whether Muslims, People of the Book or the world in general. All the new stances towards 'the other' call for tolerance and cooperation though the IG specifies some enemies from the West and extreme secularists in addition to Israel. This tolerance and cooperation was framed in a way that does not contradict the concept of *al-walā' wa al-barā'*. Also their previous understanding of *ḥisba* was revised and the conclusion was that forced *ḥisba* should be implemented only by the ruler or those appointed by him. After the process of self-criticism, the IG leaders started to criticise other jihadi groups such as al-Qaeda; dedicating two lengthy books to respond to and criticise the thought and acts of al-Qaeda. The first book shed light on the strategy and bombings of al-Qaeda and the Islamic rulings on them

and the second book spoke about the bombings that happened in Riyadh, Casablanca and Rabat and the Islamic rulings regarding them.

In all of their arguments, the IG used reconciliatory language and employed a completely different approach by framing in the general principles of the Sharia and the *Uṣūlī* concepts of harm and benefit or what is known as *Fiqh* of consequences or Jurisprudence of results and weighing matters. So, the conclusion was that any clash with others on the domestic, regional or international levels that results in harm to Muslim countries or Muslim people is prohibited as these clashes would lead to weakening of Muslim countries and would be used as justifications by their enemies to invade them.

Dynamics of the Change

This section highlights the theological tools and mechanisms through which the IG leaders were able to shift from violence to non-violence by framing in religious justifications in both cases. Thus, the section answers the main question of this chapter. These tools and mechanisms are highlighted in the following sub-sections.

Pragmatic and Contextual Reading of the Sharia

As explained in chapter 2, the IG was utterly defeated in its military confrontation with the regime and lost the sympathy of the people because of the bloodshed resulting from these confrontations and because the regime launched an ideological counter-framing war via mass media and official scholars against the thoughts and practices of the IG. Subsequently, not only *da'wa*, guidance and all the peaceful Islamic activities of the IG were lost as a result of violence, but also severe personal, social and cultural consequences were faced by the IG leaders and grassroots. As prevalent norms on the legitimacy of particular tactics affect the cost-benefit calculations of organisations,⁹⁰³ the IG found itself obliged to revise its strategies, means and tools in order not to lose its main goals and objectives of guidance and *da'wa*. The Group had to choose between ending its activities completely and restarting them in a different way, with a different approach that rectifies the catastrophic consequences of the old approach.

⁹⁰³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 18.

Thus, the revisions of the IG are in fact not a revision of the targets and objectives of the Group but a revision of the tools and means of achieving these objectives, by revising the way and approach of effecting a change. Therefore, the IG still does not approve of the status quo as such but is, rather, trying to adapt to it and change it by means of various peaceful tools and approaches. The catastrophic consequences caused by the previous approach made them realise that peaceful actions such as *da'wa* and charitable activities, build and construct while violent acts and practices demolish what the *da'wa* has built. As the Group derived its legitimacy and credibility from being an 'Islamic' group that serves Islam and people based on Islamic principles and interpretations, the new tools have to be Islamic and not at odds with Islamic principles.⁹⁰⁴ The solution to this dilemma was found in the changeable *Uṣūlī* side of the Sharia. The *Uṣūlī* side of the mainstream Islamic teachings offered the leaders a way out of their practical dilemma and miserable conditions while redeeming themselves in the eyes of God, their followers and the masses.

As highlighted and proven above in the reviews, the IG's new thought reinterprets most of the issues within the general principles of the Sharia using an *Uṣūlī* approach. This allowed the IG to shift its interpretation to the Jurisprudence of consequences and weighing matters that depends on weighing the harm and benefit of any action while taking into consideration the surrounding circumstances before interpreting texts of the Sharia. By this the IG has shifted from textual to pragmatic, purposive and contextual interpretations of the Sharia. The IG leaders established the validity of their new framing by arguing that people's interests and benefits are the main objectives of the Sharia and its religious texts. Therefore, there must be no conflict between the text and the interests of people as the Sharia came to achieve people's interests.⁹⁰⁵

Having spoken extensively about the significance of the jurisprudential principles relating to benefits and harm, the leaders of the IG applied this very principle to the attacks and clashes that had taken place, concluding that they actually breached established Sharia standards, as they caused harm while yielding no benefits. The new approach that links acts to their outcomes and consequences enabled the IG to arrive at the conclusion that if the result of armed combat was devastating, it could not be considered correct in a religious sense, even if one of the

⁹⁰⁴ For example, one of the IG members explained his frustration at the 1997 non-violence initiative before it was theologically justified: "We carried arms based on God's orders . . . we should not lay them down based on the orders of humans unless they prove it to us [theologically]." Ashour, *De-radicalization of Jihadists*, 98.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 38.

fighting groups is right and the other is wrong.⁹⁰⁶ To overcome the difficulty resulting from possible clashes between some Sharia texts and the established status quo without compromising Sharia texts, weak juristic opinions were given considerable weight. Although these weak opinion are feeble in terms of their basis in texts, they could be considered stronger as relates to practicalities and the understanding of what was actually occurring (*Fiqh al-wāqī*).⁹⁰⁷ Such feeble opinions could be the only solution to disasters that befall great nations as, if they are not adopted, Sharia rulings may be disregarded in their entirety.⁹⁰⁸ The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that their new discourse is framed in a purposive interpretation of the Sharia that heavily depends on the principles of harm and benefits or, to use different phraseology, costs and gains.⁹⁰⁹

In addition, the new arguments continually repeat and emphasise the *Uṣūlī* issues of benefit and harm, practicalities, understanding what was actually occurring and its relationship with the milieu. They maintained that being aware of the context and circumstances of an issue where a fatwa is required is essential. As a result, a fatwa should not be given unless the mufti is fully aware of its context, or has understanding of the reality behind the matter.⁹¹⁰ To change a fatwa, the leaders contend, is not something that should be done haphazardly, or due to one's whims but must be based on satisfying the interests of Muslims, as the Sharia's goal is to maximise benefits and minimise harm. In this regard, changing a fatwa could be done, subject to the ever changing needs and interests of the Muslim community. They use as evidence of this the statements of a number of *Uṣūlī* scholars, such as al-Shāṭibī (d.790/1388), Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751/1350) and al-'Izz b. 'Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262).⁹¹¹

They present these arguments using harm and benefit rule and the general objectives that the Sharia seeks to attain for the Ummah, with the outcome being a new *ijtihād* that operates within these general objectives of the Sharia (*al-maqāṣid al-āmma li al-Sharī'a*). This method of

⁹⁰⁶ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 66.

⁹⁰⁷ *Fiqh al-wāqī* or Jurisprudence of reality refers to that kind of Jurisprudence which is based on the recognition of the current established reality and the entailing necessity of dealing with it as such, in a way that makes a compromise between that reality and the Sharia. For a comprehensive definition and explanation of this, see, e.g., Al-'Umar, "Fiqh al-Wāqī." The point they want to make here is to emphasise the necessity of considering the reality when issuing Sharia rulings even if the mufti has to resort to weak opinions and abandon the textually stronger ones.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 48-9.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 39.

⁹¹⁰ Ibrāhīm, *Fatwā al-Tatār*, 18; Ḥāfiẓ, *Mubādarat Waqf al-'Unf*, 39.

⁹¹¹ See, for instance, Ḥāfiẓ, *Al-Nuṣṣ wa al-Tabayīn*, 122& 139; Ḥāfiẓ; *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 51; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 40.

ijtihād, in the IG's view, is the only way feasible to solve the problem facing the Muslim Ummah in having an infinite number of occurrences but a finite number of Sharia texts with which to deal with them.⁹¹² Their line of reasoning, renewing *ijtihād* in this manner, and seeking to meet the masses' interests, is a strong indicator that they have departed from their previous methodology of basing their stances purely on their understanding of theoretical texts. To bolster this new discursive approach, the IG leaders used history. For example, historical narrations are extensively used to enhance their discourse on the impermissibility of insurrection due to the severe harm it may result in, calling for learning lessons from the past which demonstrate that violent uprisings never result in beneficial outcomes but instead cause harm and the bloodshed of Muslims.⁹¹³

Their previous consideration of history was in fact a search for injustices in history with the aim to use them as frames of injustice and motivations of jihad. Now history is employed much more extensively but with a different focus to prove the futility of rebellion and constrain violence. Accordingly, the previous employment of history was to prove the historical nature of conflict and injustices that call for a violent response. Now the side of history that shows the severe consequences of these acts of violence is utilised more extensively. Thus, the use of history in the IG writings is not new, but the angle through which they have looked at history is now different. This selectivity could be partly justifiable as usually authors employ proofs that are supportive of their views and discard others. In the past, the perception of clash as the only viable way in dealing with rulers facilitated arguments in favour of clash; however, in the new stance the desire for conciliation has given priority to opinions that call for tolerance and conciliation, which is the common theme in each stage respectively.

Weighing acts of violence through the *Uṣūlī* scale of harm and benefit and the general objectives of the Sharia is significant not only because it argues against violence but also because it extends to almost all the Sharia matters that the IG leaders have discussed. This entailed a similar shift in their approach, which is looking at the anti-Sharia stances and decisions of the state in light of the regional and international circumstances and challenges faced by the state and the Arab conflict with Israel, as well as the general relationship with the West.

⁹¹² Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 47-8.

⁹¹³ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 40-1.

Means and Ends

The belief that jihad is a religious obligation and that God will reward Jihadists for their devotion in the afterlife is the most significant barrier that prevents jihadi individuals and organisations from abandoning violence.⁹¹⁴ Therefore, arguing that the group's previous understanding and implementation of jihad was erroneous and thus non-rewardable was essential to delegitimising the previous thought.

In this regard, IG has emphasised that jihad is a means to an end which is guiding people to the straight path of Islam. So jihad is not an end in itself. Due to the fact that the ends are giving weight over means (i.e. achieving objectives is prioritised over the means of achieving these objectives) and it has been established that the way in which jihad has been waged by the IG and other Jihadists hinders this goal, it follows that jihad of this nature has to stop. "Jihad is legislated to uphold the religion. If it is the case that it does not achieve this but instead results in the loss of lives, it should be prohibited."⁹¹⁵ This is an example of what could be called the jurisprudence of means and ends, the subject about which the IG leaders wrote their book: *Hidāyat al-Khalā'iq bayna al-Ghāyāt wa al-Wasā'il* (Guiding the Creation: Ends and Means). In this regard, the IG also reframed its previous motivational framing of re-establishing Islamic caliphate as a means, not as an end. The leaders argued that to make the establishment of the Islamic state an end in itself is a mistaken belief. Islam's encouragement to establish a state is simply a proxy to establishing the religion. With this being the case, the fundamental priority is to establish the religion, with the establishment of the state being a by-product, and if there is any conflict between these two objectives, establishing the religion takes priority.⁹¹⁶ The dominance of the *Uṣūlī* approach runs throughout this discourse, exemplifying the IG's volte face in their attitudes and theology, reframing events within the general aims of the Islamic legislation, as defined in the Science of the Principles of Jurisprudence, as opposed to their former methodology of relying purely upon literal understanding of the texts.⁹¹⁷

⁹¹⁴ Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 165.

⁹¹⁵ Ḥāfiẓ, *Tasliṭ al-Aḍwā'*, 10.

⁹¹⁶ Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 148.

⁹¹⁷ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 41-2.

From 'Aqīda to Uṣūl al-Fiqh

As explained in chapter 5, affairs that relate to beliefs or creed (*'aqīda*) are strictly derived from religious texts, irrespective of the ever-changing circumstances, and are absolute. Matters of jurisprudence, in contrast, are malleable and implemented alongside texts as dictated by the milieu. They are flexible, reflecting the flexibility and fluidity of time, places and wider contexts. For the main part, they are governed by the principle of harm and benefit and the broader objectives of the Sharia.

The IG, during the violent phase, used to view different issues as they consider the laws of physics: as a set of immutable rules created by the Lord.⁹¹⁸ Their approach to any and every religious matter was as though it were a matter of creed. An example of this can be seen when they discussed the issue of rising up against the ruler, which they used to look at only through the lens of *ḥākimiyya*. With *ḥākimiyya* being an issue of creed, texts were interpreted without consideration of the wider (socio-political) milieu in which they were being applied. With such an approach, practical considerations and the jurisprudence of outcomes do not come into play. It was exactly as Faraj framed it, "Forming the Islamic state is an enactment of God's orders, and we are not, however, responsible for the results."⁹¹⁹

Indifference concerning outcomes was a major issue with the IG political and theological attitudes as it rendered the organisation into an entity of insurrection rather than that of reform and betterment. Such a methodology restricted the IG's interpretations and actions within the textual and theological realms, without having any bearings of a socio-political, national, regional or international milieu— factors that have no connections with issues of belief, which represent the religion in the pristine sense in which they understood it. Evidence of this can be seen in their radical literature wherein creedal concepts of *tawāḍ*, submission and *ḥākimiyya* are frequently cited. Matters of creed are determined via absolute revelation, not through reasoning or contexts. Therefore, by viewing contexts merely through the lens of creed, the IG affiliates took their theological stances and creedal ideologies as the sole driver of their political actions.⁹²⁰

⁹¹⁸ Wright, "The Rebellion within: A Reporter at Large."

⁹¹⁹ Faraj, *Al-Farīda al-Ghā'iba*, 19; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 43.

⁹²⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 44.

From a theological standpoint, the Group leaders were able to smoothly alter their viewpoint on the use of violence when they reinterpreted such actions within the banner of the malleable side of the Sharia, having previously categorised them under the unchangeable side of creed. The result of this is evident in their subsequent writings, where an *Uṣūlī* methodology was more closely adhered to. By utilising this approach, the IG leaders framed their understanding of concepts that were previously used to justify violence through the principles of benefit and harm, making a compromise between their ideology and the pragmatic reality that surrounded them. 'Sharia Objectives 'benefits and harm', 'jurisprudence of outcomes' and 'jurisprudence of weighing matters' are all new concepts that featured heavily in their new writings due to the shift to the *Uṣūlī* approach. As a whole, the group's old approach was to adapt the reality to the texts, something which naturally led to revolution, but their refreshed approach is to adapt the text to the context- contextualisation.⁹²¹ Therefore, they have shifted from 'doctrinarianism' to pragmatism and 'contextualism'.

Changing the approach is manifest in the nature of the sources employed in the IG writings in each stage. As previously explored, the works of classical Salafi scholars, in addition to those of al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb, were used to justify taking up arms against local regimes.⁹²² As the ideas posed by the IG in their previous thought were mainly theological and juristic views based on traditional classical Islamic literature that was written by Muslim scholars at times when Islam was the dominant ruling power, the IG took this literature for granted as coming from the Salaf. Because the IG is a Salafi movement that follows the footsteps of the Salaf and because of its indifference to contexts or changing circumstances, it took that Jurisprudence as it is without reviewing its suitability for the current different reality.

After revisions, the Salafi nature and orientation of the IG that grant it credibility and currency in the eyes of its followers had to continue to exist. Therefore, the Salafi literature continued to dominate their writings but through another dimension and interpretation by moving from the perspective of '*Aqīda* to Principles of Jurisprudence that allows for consideration of the reality in order to reach their reality/text-based conclusions. This is particularly clear in the leaders' continuity to look at Christian residents of Muslim lands as people of *dhimma* and the classification of countries into abodes of Islam and abodes of disbelief, as in the traditional

⁹²¹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 44-5.

⁹²² Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 45.

classical sources, despite the concessions presented in the attitudes towards them and the way of dealing with them. This confirms that for Islamists the theological, creedal /juristic discourse represented, and continues to represent, the referential authority that would assign religious and theological legitimacy to, or withdraw it from, acts of violence that influence an unlimited number of people worldwide.

In their revisions, the IG leaders confessed they were mistaken, having erroneously applied classical fatwas in contexts in which they did not apply.⁹²³ Yet, the leaders continued to use the works of some of the same classical Salafi scholars, such as Ibn Taymiya and Ibn al-Qayyim. However, this time they used the writings that focus on issues of Jurisprudence rather than those that focus on issues regarding creed. Creed-related concepts are mentioned only to critique the previously-held understanding related to them. Their latter focus is on works that deal with the general principles of the Sharia, as per the Jurisprudence of benefit and harm. Another shift was that they started employing the works and ideas of contemporary scholars, whom they had previously renounced. Al-Qaraḍāwī and those of his standing were used in their new writings, particularly when the leaders discussed matters related to excessiveness and extremism, the dangers of *takfīr*, the tolerance of Islam, flexibility of fatwas and rulings changing with times and circumstances, as well as the Jurisprudence of outcomes and weighing matters.⁹²⁴ In addition, they renounced the Quṭbīan literature as that of “a man of letters who deals with general issues, and not of a Jurist who employs Islamic Jurisprudence and its Principles to arrive at precise Sharia rulings.”⁹²⁵

Conclusion

Generally speaking, revising any thought involves two processes. The first is acknowledgement of failure and a severe criticism of the previous thought and its application to actual events in the world. The second is the drafting of new thought, different from that of the past that shapes the present and the future of the revisionists and their relationships with their community and the wider context around them. For the revisionists covered in this study, the previous thought was based on their interpretation of and engagement with texts, while the new thought is based on interpretation of the reality and context and how to efficiently adapt to them. These

⁹²³ See, for example, Ibrāhīm, *Fatwā al-Tatār*, 67 ff.

⁹²⁴ See, for example, the bibliography of their book *Istrātijīyyat wa Taffīrāt al-Qā'ida*.

⁹²⁵ See, for instance, Zuhdī, *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt*, 169; Ibrahim, “Theology and Jurisprudence,” 45-6.

processes allowed the IG to move from one category of Islamist movements to another. The first category is that of groups that adopt a top-down approach, whereby ‘apostate’ rulers are violently removed, any resistance from the population is swiftly or forcibly suppressed, and the Sharia is instituted after establishing an Islamic state.

The new category is that of moderate movements of political Islam that do not see their local regimes as apostate or pagan but instead, see them as needing to be reformed through peaceful means. Therefore, they have employed a steady indoctrination of populations into accepting their worldview and political agendas through a grassroots approach that involves such peaceful means as *da‘wa*, non-violent activism, lobbying and/or political participation.⁹²⁶ However, this is not the case with the revisions of al-Jihād which, despite banning violence, still holds to most of its radical ideological stances.

Based on the founding ideology, each group has a set of goals, and a set of tactics that are acceptable to pursue in order to achieve those goals. Over time, external factors such as cultural context or structural conditions, and internal factors such as organisational cohesion and constituency, pressurise the group and influence the extent to which a particular tactic is possible or effective. This may generate a process of re-evaluation or revision that is conceptualised as an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of different tactics in fulfilling the most important goals of an organisation. As certain tactics become impossible or ineffective, the organisation is forced to adjust and either narrow its array of tactics or, if necessary, change its priorities and adopt new tactics. Gradually, this strategic adjustment, in response to external pressures and organisational dynamics, can cause the group to revise its very ideology. However, any adjustment must also be principled, which means that any alternative tactics are evaluated in relation to their ability to promote a particular mission and vision.⁹²⁷

As guiding people through *hisba* and *da‘wa* has been the primary objective of the IG since its establishment, this has made it easier for the Group to change when violence proved counterproductive to the main goal of guidance. By this, the IG returned to its original objectives upon which it was initially founded before it was drawn into violence.⁹²⁸ The tolerant, lenient

⁹²⁶ Al Raffie, “Straight from the Horse’s Mouth,” 30-1. For a detailed analysis on both categories, see Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

⁹²⁷ Matesan, “Violent Escalation and De-escalation,” 76-7.

⁹²⁸ See chapter 2 for more details on how the IG was founded initially as a *da‘wa* and *hisba* movement, without considering violence as one of their means of action.

discourse and strong presence of the IG leaders in public forums and discussions and their involvement in interviews and public issues shows that the Group is trying to reintroduce itself to the masses as an effective public and social force and have its old image corrected. However, the somewhat conservative views regarding some issues, such as *dhimma*, gives the message that the IG's attempt to reintroduce itself and revise its thought is not at the expense of the general tenets of Islam, the referential authority of the Sharia and the supremacy of the Muslim majority in Egypt.

The IG sought to found a utopian society that would take the place of the current, un-Islamic one. In order to bring this change about, the use of force, which they branded jihad, would be inevitable. The concepts of *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* and *jāhilī* regime were the foundations of their theology to bring about the change that they saw essential. They interpreted all Quranic and Prophetic texts devoid of their contexts,⁹²⁹ and used them to support their discourse. Without official religious guidance, the youth understood the fatwas of scholars of past ages without any steering, applying them to contexts that differed from the ones in which they were given.⁹³⁰

A key flaw in the IG's thought was that they sought utopia in a context and society in which it would not be possible. Although religious preaching and activities increased under Sadat's era, the faithful youth saw this as deficient, seeking to establish a full Islamic state, mirroring that of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, in what was dubbed as the 'Golden Age of Islam'.⁹³¹ Egyptian society's relationship with the state was projected as a negative archetype, seen through the lens of the old 'Golden Age' (this being the ideal). Through this approach, the status quo was seen as a flagrant deviation from the ideal.⁹³² The objective then became to restore the epitome that was reached in the past, rejecting the current reality and violently rising up against it. In the belief that it would incite the masses to revolt against the regime, they assassinated Sadat and tried to capture the governorate of Asyut.⁹³³ This did not, however, prove successful as they had failed to connect with the masses and form a basis of wider support, so the insurrection lacked the basic tools of success. As Kepel puts forward, they failed to understand the concerns and priorities of the Egyptian masses who had not felt allegiance to the Ummah in the nostalgic

⁹²⁹ This is the argument made by scholars in response to the Jihadists' arguments in this regard, see for example, Jād al-Ḥaqq and Saqr, *Naqḍ al-Farīda al-Ghā'iba*.

⁹³⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 47.

⁹³¹ Nājiḥ Ibrāhīm, "Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya," 29-30.

⁹³² Kepel, *The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 228.

⁹³³ Al-'Awwā, *Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*, 100.

manner which Islamists had imagined, nor had they broken with the values of Egyptian society, values that are primarily, but not solely, made up of Islam.⁹³⁴

The fact that the IG adopted a creed-based methodology and a literal interpretation of the texts was a more serious problem. Their own understanding of Islam consisted of a number of elements. The primary element is that Islam is essentially a creed, which is to submit fully and comprehensively to God, with all other elements measured through this scale. The second element was the literal interpretation and application of religious commandments, linking them to God's *ḥākimiyya*, which is the keyword in jihadi literature.⁹³⁵ The aims behind this is to actualise ultimate submission to God, something that can only be achieved only after ousting apostate regimes and establishing Islamic governance. This is a creed-based methodology in which the literal interpretation of the sacred texts is given priority over outcomes or consequences. Yet, Looking at the world with its pragmatic nature solely through the lens of the texts is, indeed, problematic and unrealistic.⁹³⁶

After failing to face and change the practical challenges on the ground, losing peoples' sympathy, receiving military and psychological defeat and failing to achieve any of their goals, the IG leaders recognised that taking authority through force was as fanciful as restoration of the Golden Age which they sought. Thus, they renounced the top-down approach of Islamising the society by forceful seizure of political power and accepted restricting their role to peacefully maintaining religious ethics in the society. However, following revisions, the status of the Golden Age is still held as the pinnacle of Islamic society, yet without viewing the current established order negatively. Through peaceful means, the IG seek to restore what they can of the Golden Age, aiming to adapt to the current reality, rather than revolting against it.⁹³⁷ The result has been a renewed methodology based on *Uṣūlī* principles (such as the Jurisprudence of Outcomes, of harm and benefit and of Sharia general objectives) that makes use of and adapts to the current reality, rather than rebelling against it.⁹³⁸ This enabled the leaders to move from purely legalistic to a widely contextualised interpretation of the Sharia.

⁹³⁴ Kepel, *The Prophet and Pharaoh*, 237; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 48-9; Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 48-9.

⁹³⁵ The IG leaders emphasised, in several interviews, that one of the main reasons behind committing their old violent actions was their literal interpretation of the Sharia texts. See, for instance, *Ḥurmat al-Ghuluww*, 56 ff.

⁹³⁶ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 49.

⁹³⁷ Maḥmūd Shu'ayb, one of the IG members, interview in Aḥmad, *Mu'āmara am Murāja'a*, 131.

⁹³⁸ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 49-50.

The IG perception of jihad as a means and not an end in itself facilitated the cessation of armed conflict when it became apparent that it did not result in the outcomes they had hoped for, outcomes that had been deliberated upon by leaders during their incarceration in 1981 until the decision to cease violence in 1997. When the IG leaders wrote about jihad in their enthusiastic youth, they justified their motivations behind it. They did not however, consider its practical constraints, or the challenges it brings. The harsh reality caused the leadership, now older and wiser, to shift their discourse from concentrating on the motivations of waging jihad to the practical difficulties in doing so. The shift of the discourse from speaking about motivations of jihad to its obstacles indicates the level of the ideological change.⁹³⁹

The contexts in which events took place are now considered along with the texts, and a compromise between the two is made. They now view Islam from a wider context and with a more measured vision. They achieved a balance between their theoretical principles and the surrounding reality; and they now differentiate between flexible and the fixed matters.⁹⁴⁰ What this tells us in general is that the ideological framework on which Islamist groups are founded regulates the central goals of the group and determines what set of tactics are acceptable. However, when the social, political and cultural contexts constrain movements and show them that not all goals are achievable and that not all tactics are viable or effective, these groups try, in their day-to-day practice, to adjust to the context, and over time these adjustments can lead to ideological revisions.⁹⁴¹

Thus, the IG and al-Jihād's initial framing was intended to engender collective action to arrive at the motivational framing of implementing the Islamic Sharia, restoring the caliphate and attaining the dominance of Islamic rule. These motivations were combined together under the statement 'establishing the religion'. As framing literature suggests, to proffer collective action frames is to suggest the existence of an opportunity to bring about social change, and that people can act as potential agents of their own history. Because the framing of political opportunity is an essential component of collective action frames,⁹⁴² both Faḍl and the IG, before revisions, interpreted political space in ways that emphasise opportunity rather than

⁹³⁹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 50-1.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 51.

⁹⁴¹ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 17-18.

⁹⁴² W Gamson and D Meyer, "The Framing of Political Opportunity," in D McAdam et al, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Framing* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 285.

constraint; which generated violent collective action to seize the opportunity and maximise their gains. This has changed after revisions as, due to the defeat and catastrophic consequences, they interpreted political space in ways that emphasise constraint rather than opportunity. This confirms that framing processes and political opportunity are linked interactively.

However, one of the drawbacks of the revisions is that they were mainly meant to criticise the past attempts at violence, as most of the issues discussed in the literature on revisions relate to practices and concepts that manifested themselves in the past without providing any plans or viable alternatives for the future. This can be attributed to the fact that the revisions came at a moment of incapacitation, organisational weakness and disillusionment with the initial cause, and not at a moment of organisational strength. This may also explain why the focus was not offering an alternative agenda and model of activism, but rather on revising the founding ideology in order to continue to have a coherent *raison d'être* and organisational identity.⁹⁴³

However, as the revisions criticised the past without offering a new viable alternative for changing and opposing the current reality, they seem to be an approval of the current repressive reality. Therefore, the two groups in their new attitudes cannot be considered as political opposition forces as they have neither political programs nor do they offer a realistic program for change. Having an alternative vision and active political opposition role will dissipate any fears that the revisions are meant to approve the current harsh reality and support the regime. This will also add to the credibility of the revisions as it will remove the suspicion that they are supportive of the current status quo and the tyrant regime. This will also allow them to be seen as an attempt to change the approaches and ways of dealing with reality to reach better results after the path of violence has proven to be futile.

Unlike al-Jihād, this has been undertaken by the IG after the collapse of the Mubarak regime.⁹⁴⁴ As the IG only established a political party and participated in the parliamentary elections and political life after the collapse of the Mubarak regime, this suggests that it was the Mubarak regime that did not allow them a socio-political role when it was in power. However, the political role of the IG and other Islamic movements has been largely paralysed again after the

⁹⁴³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 219.

⁹⁴⁴ Though some individuals, who were formerly affiliated with al-Jihād Organisation, formed the 'Islamic Party' after the collapse of the Mubarak regime, this was not sanctioned by Faḍl, and the majority of these individuals left al-Jihād Organisation long before the revisions. See Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 303.

military coup of 2013, which indicates that it is authoritarian military regimes that tend to restrict and impede the peaceful political opposition of Islamist movements.

Furthermore, the revisions in general, and those of al-Jihād in particular, though considered a breakthrough in the jihadi thought, are still limited in their scope and presentation of new ideas and the way ideas and ideology are structured. The revisions, coming from Salafi groups, still work within the parameters of the old classical interpretations from which they derive their theological and religious legitimacy. Therefore, the revisions dare not criticise the classical interpretation whether in terms of its theorisation, approach or interpretation.

This is mainly because of the political, theological, dogmatic and intellectual environments in Egypt which are subject to several restrictions imposed on them. This is also because any departure from the Salafi approach in deduction and arriving at rulings would be met with flat refusal from the grassroots of these Salafi movements. Thus, the revisionists depended, in changing their interpretations regarding the concepts related to violence, on a change of their tools of deduction and means of analysis, rather than revising the whole ideological and theological Salafi set of ideas and foundations upon which the ideology of these and similar groups were generally founded. Therefore, the revisionists, despite the importance of their new thought, cannot be considered religious reformers as they not only failed to question the traditional structure of Jurisprudence but also because they are still working within them and using their tools and means of deduction.

Therefore, the two groups cannot be classified as reformist groups, but their revisions can be described as a transition towards moderation and peaceful coexistence with the society.⁹⁴⁵ Though they are not arguing for a democratic future in the conventional or liberal sense, the revisions of the IG are forward looking (rather than being nostalgic) and introduce what some have called an 'alternative modernity'.⁹⁴⁶ This, together with the significant difference between the IG and al-Jihād revisions, proves that ideologies of Salafi jihadists are not as adaptable as suggested in recent de-radicalisation literature, and cannot change merely because of external causal factors.

⁹⁴⁵ 'Abd al-Fattāh, "Al-Khiṭāb al-Islāmī," 104.

⁹⁴⁶ Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates," 368.

Findings and Implications

This study has explored the theological and intellectual ideas and concepts that were employed to justify/retract violence by two Islamist groups in Egypt in the period between 1968 until present. In connecting this to the socio-political milieu in Egypt, the study explores the ideational and ideological justifications of Islamists and the role they played in legitimising or de-legitimising political violence. By positing a specific relationship between thought and action, this study distinguishes itself from other studies, such as that of Omar Ashour, that focus on structural conditions and the political process. In this way it fills a significant gap in the existing literature.

The study employs various approaches to realise this goal: the political process approach to explain the context, textual analysis to explain texts and ideology, and framing to explain mobilisation/tactics and link thought to action. The three approaches integrate to address and connect the main aspects of this study and answer its main questions. Therefore, the conclusion below, in a nutshell, highlights how the three approaches explain the different aspects of this study: ideology before and after revisions, mechanisms of change in textual theological, structural and framing terms, together with the implications that the findings of this study reveal and how this all contributes to the literature on the topic. As the theological textual findings constitute the focus of this study, they will be unpacked first, followed by the structural and framing aspects.

Out of the two groups covered in this study, textual analysis has established that the revisions of the IG reflect a genuine change in the ideology while those of al-Jihād Organisation, as presented by their ideologue Dr. Faḍl, do not. The latter can be best described as 'disengagement' or, according to Ashour's categorisation, as 'pragmatic' rather than 'ideological' or 'substantive' de-radicalisation. Although Faḍl has practically closed the door of violence under the pretext of the *Uṣūlī* principles of harm and benefit, incapacity and weakness, all of his previous views on issues related to *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* remain unchanged. Moreover, the actual behavioural disengagement from violence took place before the revisions and was not a consequence of the revisions but a consequence of the defeat and lack of capacity.

This confirms the premise of this study, which is also the view of Schwedler, that examining political behaviour alone, as other studies on moderation and de-radicalisation do, provides

insufficient evidence of moderation because it leaves open the possibility that political actors might act as if they are moderate while harbouring radical agendas.⁹⁴⁷ It also shows the value of textual analysis in examining the moderation of Islamists and its extent in more precise terms, for academic studies that pursued structural or political process approaches on the revisions of the two groups failed to explain the ideological nuances between the two groups or identify the lack of genuine change in Faḍl's new views .

Furthermore, the variation in the degree and genuineness of the revisionist of the two groups, as explained in this study, shows how ideology can challenge, as much as it can be influenced by, structural socioeconomic and political considerations. Thus, this study differs from other studies in that it proves that while changes in structural conditions or political opportunity may provide the strategic logic for Islamist groups to cease violence, they do not always lead to ideological moderation, and for ideological activists, certain red lines may not be crossed even when there is strong logic for behavioural moderation.⁹⁴⁸ Therefore, the findings of this study challenge Ashour's emphasis that his hypothesis and variables work for all Islamist movements and perhaps for movements of political violence in general. The present study shows that a process that works for one group or locality may not work for other groups or localities, and emphasises that the best way to study Islamism is on a case-by-case basis, because the diversity of contexts, ideologies, objectives and motivations of the different Islamist movements renders each movement distinct and makes generalisation of little value.

As regards the IG, textual analysis has shown that the IG revisions utilised several textual and contextual methods to argue against violence by framing in the general objectives of the Sharia and principles of *Uṣūlī al-Fiqh*, particularly the notions of reality and harm and benefit, to come to the conclusion that as long as fighting has caused grave harm and evil without achieving any benefits, it becomes prohibited in both logic and the Sharia. The catastrophic consequences caused by the previous approach made the IG's consideration of reality change, as the leaders started to use the status quo to determine the consequences of their actions instead of using it as a justification for their existing beliefs. Therefore, the status quo was used before revisions to justify their understanding of the text but not to determine how to effectively change that

⁹⁴⁷ Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation*, 14.

⁹⁴⁸ Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates," 359.

status quo. So, the main driver of the group's actions before revisions was their understanding of the text to change the 'un-Islamic' conditions.

After revisions, the reality and circumstantial developments are used, along with the text, to determine how to deal with the status quo in light of what is possible. In other words, after revisions, the status quo plays an important role in determining how to react to the circumstances instead of being used to justify irrational responses to these circumstances. Consequently, the pressure of their predicament, defeat and the new world order made the leaders of the IG recognise that removing the ruling regimes by force was not only unattainable but also had led to catastrophic consequences, and that engaging in the society by calling people to true tolerant Islam and competing with others socially and politically is the only productive way to Islamise the society. Hence, the change in the language and the transition towards lenient discourse and guidance rather than that of clash and confrontation.

In theological terms, the IG and al-Jihād derived their legitimacy and credibility from being 'Islamic' groups that serve Islam and people based on Islamic principles and interpretations, therefore the new tools had to be Islamic and not at odds with the general principles of Islam. The solution to this dilemma was found in the flexible *Uṣūlī* domain of the Sharia. So, revisionists managed to change their views when they shifted issues related to violence from the Sharia fixed side of creed to its flexible side of Jurisprudence. This led to a new approach in their framing which is that of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* or Principles of Jurisprudence. Replacing the methodology of creed which is based solely on text with a new *Uṣūlī* approach that takes contexts into consideration helped the leaders to reevaluate and measure the concepts used to justify violence based on the general principles of the Sharia and notions of capacity and harm and benefit, which resulted in a relative conciliation between their ideological orientations and the status quo. Therefore, the revised literature is full of such *Uṣūlī* concepts as Sharia objectives, benefit and harm, the jurisprudence of outcomes and the jurisprudence of weighing matters. Instead of the previous methodology of trying to adapt the context and status quo to suit the text, which necessarily leads to revolution, the leaders now make a compromise between the text and the context. Thus, the previous revolutionary approach of adapting the reality to the text was

replaced with the new reconciliatory approach that enabled the revisionists to make a compromise between the text and the context.⁹⁴⁹

The use by the two groups of the *Uṣūlī* approach as a tool and means of deduction, and the emphasis on considering the status quo and harm and benefit as determining factors to argue against violence, despite the difference in their magnitude and conclusions, reveals that any retraction of Islamist movements from violence, whether genuine or pragmatic, would be based on and generally framed in the *Uṣūlī* approach and its tools and means of deduction, as well as on the general principles of the Sharia. An examination of the revisions of other non-Egyptian Jihadist groups, such as the Libyan Islamic group,⁹⁵⁰ reveals a great deal of similarity in their use of the same tools and means of deduction to arrive at their new conclusions, which further reveals the generalisable nature of this point. This highlights a significant aspect in determining how best to counter the powerful ideas that are associated with jihadist violence.

Moreover, as the revisions of the IG has used the *Uṣūlī* approach much more extensively than those of al-Jihād and has extended it to most of their arguments, this suggests that the degree of change in the ideology of each group corresponds to the number of concepts they have moved from the static to the dynamic domain of the Sharia.⁹⁵¹ Faḍl has moved only rebellion without moving *ḥākimiyya*, *takfīr* or issues related to them, whereas the IG has moved most of the pro-violence concepts including *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* to the changeable domain.

The fact that the revisions occurred only after the defeat of the two groups and the catastrophic consequences of confrontation suggests that de-radicalisation of groups and movements is mostly an internal retrospection and an acknowledgment by leaders and followers that their approach to political action had failed to achieve any positive results. This, together with the fact that de-legitimisation of violence by leaders has succeeded in convincing the grassroots while the efforts of official and independent prominent scholars to broker a cease fire between the state and the IG failed, even though the arguments used by both are quite similar and these sheikhs seem to have a greater authority on such kind of arguments, suggests three things.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibrahim, "Theology and Jurisprudence," 44-5.

⁹⁵⁰ See, e.g., The revisions of the Libyan Islamic Group in Al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya al-Lībiyya, *Dirāsāt Taṣḥīhiyya fī Maḥālim al-Jihād wa al-Ḥisba wa al-Ḥukm 'alā al-Nās* (Tripoli: Al-Manāra li al-I'ān, 2009). For an analysis of the causes of the revisions of this group see Ashour, "Post-Jihadism," 377-97.

⁹⁵¹ This is a generalisable point: the degree of change in any jihadist movement reviewing its thought would correspond to the number of concepts they have moved from the static to the dynamic side of the Sharia.

The first is that internal debates on ideology and retrospections should primarily be understood in the organisational context in which they take place.⁹⁵² This means that revisions have to be understood as an internal organisational process resulting from retrospection triggered by contextual factors such as defeat and changes in political opportunity structures, which proves to the leaders that their previous approach was wrong and therefore needs to be reviewed and corrected. Revisions do not occur in the form of ideological implantation or dictation of ideas marketed to the groups from outside. The second is that the religious authority that can have an impact on jihadist movements is not confined to the theological religious arguments presented to them. Rather, for these theological arguments to be acceptable and influential, they must be presented to these movements by someone who has some sort of ‘credibility’ and ‘heroic stance’ recognised by these movements. The third is that not all forms of religious authority can be effective with all audiences. Instead, Jihadist audience requires a different configuration from its own credible sources.⁹⁵³ This suggests that trust and credibility are essential to any Islamist organisation seeking recruits, as it seeks to maximise the resonance of a message with its intended audiences. Without credibility, organisations, especially those engaged in high-risk activism, have little hope of mobilising adherents to achieve their objectives.⁹⁵⁴

Technically speaking, what enabled the IG leaders to revoke their previous thought regarding *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* was their consideration of *jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl* as conditions for *takfīr* and their belief that the refraining group was Muslim, in addition to the necessity of fulfilment of conditions and absence of impediments before issuing any judgement of *takfīr*. Excluding the ruler from the above rules was an unjustified gap in their theory. Through this gap the new thought could revoke the previous argument on the rulers’ apostasy and the consequent necessity of fighting them. All they did in the new stance was to apply the conditions of *jaḥd* and *istiḥlāl* to the ruler as well; and they moved the *ḥākimiyya* to the flexible side of the sharia in which practical considerations would be considered.

Faḍl, the ideologue of al-Jihād, could not do the same, as he considered rulers and their supporters equally apostate without the need for *jaḥd* or *istiḥlāl* and without the fulfilment of conditions and the absence of impediments. Accordingly, he could not change the ideological stance in this regard and, therefore, he resorted to practical considerations only. Another

⁹⁵² Drevon, “Assessing Islamist De-radicalization,” 302.

⁹⁵³ Jackson, “Beyond Jihad,” 67.

⁹⁵⁴ Page et al, “Framing Narratives,” 162.

methodological difference between the IG thought and that of al-Jihād is that the writings of Faḍl both before and after revisions maintained the same textual repetitive approach despite the limited employment of reality and context in his new writings. The IG, however, though maintained a textual approach, had more advanced, progressive interpretations and moved a great deal towards new *ijtihād* and analysis as well as a wider consideration of the reality. Therefore, the revisions of the IG are deeper, more comprehensive, more influenced with and reflective of contemporary reformist ideas, and more dependent on sources written by contemporary scholars.

Nonetheless, the revisions of the IG are in fact not a reconsideration of the targets and objectives of the group, but a revision of the tools and means of achieving these objectives by revising the way and means of change. Therefore, the IG still does not approve of the status quo as such, but is, rather, trying to change it by means of different peaceful tools and approaches. Thus, the revisions of the IG represent a transition from the old thought that adopts the *thought* of exception and necessity, to the new thought that adopts the *Fiqh* of social or public life; a transition from the approach of insurrection to the approach of *da'wa*; a transition from violence as a tool of social and political conflict to the peaceful struggle for change.

The solidarity of the IG as a well-organised entity under a coherent, unified and highly venerable leadership made it easier for the leaders to market their new thought to their followers. However, this was not the case with al-Jihād, which since its establishment, has been made up of different scattered groups united only by the common belief of the necessity of using force to oust the 'apostate' Egyptian regime. The lack of unity of al-Jihād groups and the lack of a solid structure and unified leadership, hindered internal dialogue and retrospection and stalled the possibility to articulate a shared position. This made the internal processes of retrospection and argumentation inefficient in reaching conclusions similar to those of the IG and limited the available options to the views of Faḍl as the only referential authority accepted by most al-Jihād members.

Furthermore, the organisational nature and founding objectives of each of the two groups have affected their revisions. Al-Jihād is originally a clandestine organisation that believes in the apostasy of the regime and its supporters and takes ousting that regime as a goal, a task that can be achieved only and exclusively through armed rebellion. Therefore, the Organisation adopts a careful system of selecting its members and affiliates. The IG, however, is originally a

social and public *da'wa* group that promotes public activity and adopts *hisba* and *da'wa* as primary tools for the Islamisation of the society. The IG focus on *hisba* and *da'wa*, which are meant essentially for guidance, made it easier for them to change as violence proved counterproductive to the main goal of guidance. By revising its thoughts and means of achieving the founding objectives, the IG has returned to its original objectives upon which it was initially founded before it was drawn into violence. On the other hand, Faḍl's focus on dogmatic issues of *ḥākimiyya* and *takfīr* shows that he is not as much concerned with guidance as he is with *ḥākimiyya* and categorising people into patterns of belief and disbelief, a posture that makes rethinking the ideas because of their futility in guidance farfetched, which was reflected in his strategic, rather than ideological recantations.

Thus, this study proposes that the nature, organisational structure and the main goals of Islamist groups in general play a crucial role in deciding the nature and degree of their revisions. It also proves the note made by other studies on Islamist de-radicalisation, that de-radicalisation programs and studies lack an accurate way to measure success as they point to recidivism rates, which only measure disengagement,⁹⁵⁵ and that most Islamist de-radicalisation programs boast unverified claims of extremely high success rates.⁹⁵⁶ Furthermore, this study contributes greatly to providing solutions to these two problems by providing a framework for measurement, assessment and verification based on textual analysis of the revisionists' texts and ideological attitudes.

This study has also shown that even though Salafi Islamist movements rely on very similar texts, they vary greatly in their interpretations of these texts. Therefore, the study argues that both the text and context need to be considered. Even if texts and their interpretations are similar, the contexts are usually different from one country or group to another; and in the very rare case where the context is similar, as in the case of the two Egyptian groups, the interpretations of texts and their application to the reality are different from one group to another. Therefore, any study of radicalisation or de-radicalisation needs to take into consideration different ideological, cultural and contextual factors. The disagreements among leaders of the same

⁹⁵⁵ Marisa L Porges, "The Saudi Deradicalization Experiment," *Council on Foreign Relations* (Expert Brief [22 January 2010]).

⁹⁵⁶ John Horgan and Kurt Braddock, "Rehabilitating the Terrorists? Challenges in Assessing the Effectiveness of De-Radicalization Programs," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (22, no. 2 [April 2010]), 276; Rabasa, *Deradicalizing Islamist Extremists*, 8.

groups under investigation over some ideological issues suggests that even within the same group, ideological and cultural differences need to be taken into consideration.

The study has also proven that even within a single country like Egypt where the structural and psychological, as well as the circumstances surrounding political process are common to the majority of movements, there are sharp disagreements and differences between various Islamist groups, despite the fact that they all draw from the same well of Islam. Such differences are based mainly on ideology, not on circumstances or structural conditions. This is a major reason why ideology is the focus of this study. By providing an in-depth understanding of the ideology of militant Islamists and how it is retracted, the study offers a deeper understanding of the core religious ideas and tenets that are used to attract new recruits and the counter-ideological ways that can be effective in reversing violent ideology.

The clear understanding of the ideology the study offers helps to better distinguish each group's features and thoughts and thus, minimises the danger of mistakenly attacking wrong ideas or groups and prevents antagonising others, which inhibits complicating the problem. The detailed explanation of ideological similarities, differences and nuances between the two groups, using textual and frame analysis, breaks with the prevalent tendency of homogenising the ideology of Islamist movements. Such a tendency proves to be counterproductive because it ignores diversity and ideological variation among Islamist movements and glosses over the type of discursive work required to articulate and elaborate the array of possible links between ideas, events, and actions, thereby limiting our understanding of these movements and indirectly affecting the strategies for effectively combating and coping with the threats they pose.

This, in total, has provided information and insights on Jihadist groups' ideological recruitment and mobilisation strategies, which in turn contributes to counterterrorism efforts. Furthermore, it helps arrive at ideas that can be effective and religiously acceptable alternatives to violent ideas and which can be offered to neutralise violence in the name of Islam or at least impede freelance and potential recruits by countering the appeal of the jihadist ideology. By showing a total reversal or relative moderation of some ideational elements (frames) and highlighting the ideological differences between two groups that stem from the same country and pursue similar goals, the study shows that the ideology of militant Islamist movements is not fixed, permanent or static but rather can be flexible and adaptable.

The variation in the ideological level of commitment to or retraction from violence based on both ideological and pragmatic considerations proves that Islamist movements are both principled and strategic, that the religious ideological tenets of groups can change and adjust over time and that the interplay between ideology and pragmatic and organisational considerations determine the level and degree of any revisions. Thinking of ideology as a two-sided concept that contains both fundamental principles and day-to-day tactics (fixed and flexible sides of the Sharia), helps explain how change may take place and be driven by adaptation to a particular socio-political context. This conception of ideology as a two-sided concept helps avoid confusing tactical change with more fundamental adjustment to the overall vision and mission of a group.⁹⁵⁷

The two groups' refusal to change some of their ideas— though deemed radical by others — shows that though Islamists can be strategic and pragmatic, they are redlined by their religious vision and ideology. This suggests that cost-benefit calculations are not made in absolute terms but rather in relation to religious convictions and aspirations, and that religious interpretations provide significant filters through which the structural socioeconomic and political reality is interpreted. Thus, though structural conditions place Islamist groups under different pressures and incentives, these external incentives or deterrents are interpreted through the ideological principles driving organisational behaviour.⁹⁵⁸ Therefore, shifts in opportunity structures that provide social and political openings do not necessarily lead to moderation of Islamist groups as they are circumscribed by ideas and beliefs.

In framing and structural terms, the initial success of Islamist movements vis-à-vis the state resulted from widespread socioeconomic and political injustices as well as political repression which eroded popular support for the regime. This affected the credibility of the regime's 'official Islam' among disaffected and marginalised groups, which prompted them to turn to 'popular' Islam and reputable community leaders, including Islamic activists. Islamists invested in these by articulating Islamic frames or solutions and attributing them to reputable frame articulators (scholars) and the use of publicly recognised symbols and language that tapped into cultural experiences and collective memories. To maximise access to discontented segments of the society, Islamists merged religious themes with nonreligious factors to broaden their

⁹⁵⁷ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 380.

⁹⁵⁸ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 69.

support base among those who were merely seeking a change to the status quo, rather than an Islamic transformation.⁹⁵⁹

Interpretative frames produced by the leaders arrayed religious and cultural concepts and symbols that initially appealed to people's sentiments, emotions and social and financial needs. In this way, elements of their discourse could resonate well with segments of the population beyond their immediate supporters and adherents. Though coated in religious discourse, the prognostic and motivational frames of the two groups also provided an attractive image of an idealised Islamic state, capable of solving Egypt's numerous social, political and economic problems.

However, these frames lost their resonance as they gradually lost their practical salience to targets of mobilisation when they failed to deliver the promised socioeconomic results. To the actual adherents, the comprehensive defeat, miserable conditions, severe consequences of pro-violence frames and their failure to achieve their motivational framing heavily influenced the empirical credibility and resonance of these frames.⁹⁶⁰ The reduction in frame salience resulted from the apparent contradiction between these groups' theory and tactical practice in addition to the lack of effectiveness and empirical credibility that were proven by the military and psychological defeat of the movements, which made the overwhelming majority of the groups' followers and sympathisers end up in prison under miserable conditions or chased without achieving any of their objectives. This made these frames lose their mobilising potency and pushed towards a different framing.

This explains why attempts to cease violence before the defeat of the two organisations failed. The success of the ideological reversal only after defeat and practical cessation of violence, and not before or during the confrontations, suggests that attempts to ideologically delegitimise violence during the course of conflict are unlikely to succeed because an ongoing environment of military conflict is more conducive to negotiating pressing demands rather than supportive

⁹⁵⁹ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 205.

⁹⁶⁰ Resonance, which is essential for the effectiveness or mobilising potency of any frames, can be influenced by two factors: the credibility of the frame and its relative salience. The credibility of a frame results from three factors: the credibility of the frame articulators or claim makers (leaders and ideologues), empirical credibility and frame consistency. A frame's consistency refers to the agreement between a movement's beliefs, claims, and actions. Inconsistency can manifest itself in two ways: in terms of apparent contradictions between beliefs or claims; and in terms of perceived contradictions among framings and tactical actions (i.e., between what a movement says and what it does). Therefore, the greater and clearer the apparent contradictions, the more problematic the mobilisation and the less resonant the framing. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 619-20.

religious interpretations, and because leaders are less likely to credibly address the religious legitimacy of the rationale for violence with their followers when an armed struggle is rising.⁹⁶¹ This is particularly true as during the conflict, frame resonance and credibility continued to hold their mobilising power, and the frames and tactics of these movement were not proven to be counterproductive. Experiencing multiple failures made the ideology prone to questions and criticism and exhausted the appeal, energy and justificatory legitimacy of violence. The attempts to maintain the existence and integrity of the group pushed towards abandoning some of its basic tactics and/ or principles.

Subsequently, the empirical credibility—which refers to the apparent fit between the framings and real world events— of the collective action frames of both the IG and al-Jihād was shaken and proven to be unobtainable after their defeat.⁹⁶² Therefore, their claims failed to be empirically verified as there was nothing in the practical world that could be seen as empirical evidence of the claims embedded in the framing. Nonetheless, the fact that some, such as al-Ẓawāhirī and others, argued against the revisionists' new frames of incapacity, weakness and harm and benefits, proposes that 'empirical credibility is in the eyes of the beholder', and that the claimed connection between the frame and the real world does not have to be generally believable, but it suffices to be believable to some segment of prospective or actual adherents.⁹⁶³

Furthermore, frame articulators (leaders and actual adherents) lost their field battle with the regime at a high cost in terms of bloodshed and excessive security measures in addition to the counter-framing of the state through media and official scholars, which alienated the masses from these movements and robbed them of the sympathy that people had initially felt for them. Thus, during that period, the ideological appeal of radical Jihadism was greatly damaged by violent confrontation with the state and the suffering that this conflict inflicted upon the Egyptian society. Segments of religiously-motivated Egyptians were shifting away from Jihadism, either to rediscover the value of the Brotherhood's nonviolent approach or to embrace new forms of religiously-based civil society activities, such as preaching and providing social services

⁹⁶¹ Drevon, "Assessing Islamist De-radicalization," 298-9.

⁹⁶² As framing researchers emphasise, the issue here is not whether diagnostic and prognostic claims are actually factual or valid, but whether their empirical referents lend themselves to being read as 'real' indicators of the diagnostic claims. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 620.

⁹⁶³ Jasper and Poulsen's, "Recruiting Strangers and Friends," 496; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 620.

to the poor.⁹⁶⁴ This led the frames of these movements to lose their competition with 'official frames', as the vacuum left by the frames of Islamist movements during and after their defeat and imprisonment was filled by official frames that sought not only to limit but also to eradicate the resonance of opposing unofficial frames of Islamist movements.⁹⁶⁵

The above changes in the cultural and political opportunity structures together affected the three dimensions of frame salience: centrality, experiential commensurability, and narrative fidelity or cultural resonance.⁹⁶⁶ Centrality refers to how essential the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with the frames are to the lives of the targets of mobilisation. Undoubtedly, prison under insufferable conditions for detainees, miserable conditions outside prison for their families and failing to achieve the motivational framing or even maintain normal living conditions, had affected the centrality of the frames of violence to the lives of the two groups' actual and potential adherents. Thus, each group was forced by its own internal contradictions and by the pressures of the status quo to reproduce itself within the boundaries of its ideological redlines. For the same reasons, the frames also lost their resonance due to the lack of experiential commensurability which refers to how the frames are congruent or resonant with the personal, everyday experiences of the targets of mobilisation; the hypothetical frames became practically too abstract and distant from the lives and experiences of the targets. This is reflected in the revisionists' extensive use of such terms as '*al-wāqī*' (reality, status quo), '*al-maṣāliḥ wa al-mafāsid*' (benefit and harm), '*adam al-qudra*' (incapacity), '*al-ḍa'f*' (weakness), etc.

The same also applies to the third element affecting frame resonance which is cultural resonance or narrative fidelity, which refers to the extent to which proposed framings are culturally resonant with the targets' so called, 'cultural narrations', 'domain assumptions', or 'inherent ideology'.⁹⁶⁷ The above conditions made it clear for the two groups that the interpretations offered for the proffered frames were not culturally resonant with people's

⁹⁶⁴ Hamzawy and Grebowski, "From Violence to Moderation," 3.

⁹⁶⁵ In an effort to obtain and maintain legitimacy, regimes in the Muslim world articulate innocuous frames that support their power and interests. These frames do not call for broad societal or state transformations, but instead emphasise individual piety and concern for personal salvation, thus, calling for a politically quiescent form of Islam. At the same time, regimes also attempt to limit the institutional resources and public space available for the dissemination of alternative frames that could challenge their legitimacy. This is manifested in state control of mosques, sermons, and other public religious institutions and practices in a way that is designed to amplify regime frames and silence or limit other perspectives. See, Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 205.

⁹⁶⁶ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 621.

⁹⁶⁷ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 621.

inherent ideologies or common beliefs or even with the adherents' 'inherent ideology' before they adopted the new 'derived ideology' that led them to such miserable conditions. This was faster and much deeper with the IG than with al-Jihād as the founding principles of the IG were more concerned with the religious precepts of avoiding harm and protecting the Muslim community, which made losing audience and public condemnation extremely costly on both the ideological and pragmatic levels.

This led them to 'frame transformation' which is a strategic frame alignment process⁹⁶⁸ that refers to changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones (revisions) by constructing new powerful and compelling interpretations that serve as counter diagnosis of the issues that led to empirical failure in an attempt to lend empirical credibility, centrality, experiential commensurability, and cultural resonance to frame transformation efforts. This shows that it is not just the frames and ideas themselves that matter, but also the 'process' through which certain frames or conclusions are reached. The difference between al-Jihād and the IG in framing violence and revisions manifests itself, as discussed above, in the scope of the problems or issues addressed and the ensuing direction of the attribution of blame, which emphasises the observation of framing researchers that the most obvious way in which collective action frames vary is in terms of the issues addressed and the resultant direction of attribution.⁹⁶⁹

So, in terms of framing, the present study shows how ideological narrative or space shapes political action and vice versa, and explains how the interplay of these variables facilitates, affects, restrains or transforms the ideological and practical commitments of Islamist movements. Moreover, the study offers a much-needed⁹⁷⁰ elaboration on the interaction of frames and ideology and how this could impact the dynamics of contention. In addition, the change in the frames presented by Islamist movements confirms that the extant ideologies of Islamist movements constitute "cultural resources from which collective frames are partly derived, but not in a determinative fashion. Rather, cultural or religious ideologies function much like established vineyards from which different varietals can be innovatively grafted together to generate a new yield."⁹⁷¹

⁹⁶⁸ Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 625.

⁹⁶⁹ See, e.g., Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," 618.

⁹⁷⁰ Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and SMT," 208.

⁹⁷¹ Snow and Byrd, "Ideology, Framing and Islamic Terrorist Movements," 130.

This generally shows that the Islamic Sharia provides diverse options of social and political strategies from which Islamist movements can draw and adopt distinct ideologies. These ideologies define the goals and priorities of each movement and its acceptable tactics. Once the ideological commitments are established, the tactics and strategies of an Islamist group at a particular time are determined by the complex interaction between the group, the state and the society. These interactions make groups adapt and change every-day practices,⁹⁷² which leads to fundamental ideological or strategic revisions.

Furthermore, the fact that the revisions of the two groups are considerably different from each other, even though both groups have lived in the same country, have undergone the same structural restraints, the same socio-economic conditions, the same political process as well as the same prison environment, shows the failure of structural and causal explanations of violence and revisions in explaining the nature and degree of de-radicalisation in structural terms. This shows that though the revisions of the two groups under discussion largely employ cost-benefit analysis to justify their decision to cease violence, these cost-benefit calculations do not occur in an ideological vacuum, and, therefore, purely structural or rational-choice approaches are deficient due to their underestimation of the role of ideas in these cost-benefit calculations. In other words, cost-benefit calculations are translated through the ideological preferences of a group, so that a tactic might have different benefits to different groups even within the same social and political context, based on their ideological preferences and goals.⁹⁷³ This is further confirmed by the fact that political and democratic participation was undertaken by the IG, and not by al-Jihād, which proves that while Islamists may rationally respond to opportunity structures, possible responses are often limited by ideological parameters that may render some choices unacceptable.

Thus, one of the major contributions of this dissertation is that it challenges the dominant literature in the field and proves that radicalisation/de-radicalisation does not lie in the structural grievances alone, but, more importantly, in the way Jihadists' religious ideological framework interprets religious texts in light of these structural grievances. It shows the importance of the oft-neglected ideological element and the value of the textual approach in studying these groups and further proves that the nature, structure and the religious founding

⁹⁷² Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 16-17.

⁹⁷³ Matesan, "Violent Escalation and De-escalation," 379.

objectives of Islamist groups in general play a crucial role in deciding the nature and degree of their revisions. The dissertation also contributes to the debate over the role of ideology in political violence and greatly supports the argument that religious ideology plays a crucial role in radicalising or de-radicalising Islamist movements and individuals. When it comes to the intellectual and ideological origins of violence, the dissertation confirms the previously discussed view that the problem lies in the Islamic subset of Salafi Jihadism and its interpretation of Islam, and not in Islam as a religion, since the orthodox teachings of Islam in its flexible side of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* have constituted the main methodology of revoking violence. Finally, the above findings of this study, its interdisciplinary nature and its mixed-method approach makes it a valuable contribution to different branches of knowledge that explore political violence in the name of religion.⁹⁷⁴

⁹⁷⁴ This includes, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Terrorism Studies, Counterterrorism Studies, Political Science, International Relations, Security Studies, Social Sciences, Comparative Politics as well as the literature on Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies.

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